A Study of
The Social Principles of the United Methodist Church: Making Disciples of Jesus Christ into Good Members of the Democrat Party

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents 2
Introduction 6
History 7
Preamble 17
The Natural World and Insuring Domestic Tranquility 19
Biblical Reflections 20
Theology and Creation 29
Ethical considerations 32
160 37
A. Water, Air, Soil, Minerals, Plants 40
B. Energy Resources Utilization 43
C. Animal Life 44
D. Space 45
E. Science and Technology 45
F. Food Safety 47
The Nurturing Community and Insuring Domestic Tranquility 49
Bible passages 52
Family in a Free Society – Finding an intimate friendship 64
Marriage, divorce, re-marriage, and gender issues in Christianity 71
Individual Character and Homosexuality 91
Government as defender of family 125
161 129
The Family 130
Other Christian Communities 130
Marriage 132
Divorce 132
Single Persons 133
Women and Men 133
Human Sexuality 134
Family Violence and Abuse 135
Sexual harassment 135
Abortion 136
Ministry to Those Who Have Experienced an Abortion 136
Adoption 136
Faithful care for dying persons 137
Suicide 137
The Social Community and Insuring Domestic Tranquility 149
The sense in which free societies are the best social world (home) for human beings 150
The oppressive force of racism 162
The oppressive force of sexism 173
The oppressive force of established religion – Religious tolerance and its limits 176

The social alienation expressed in the entertainment industry: sloth and lust 184
Modern agriculture and the food supply 193
The parental role of government and retirement 197
The parental role of government and health care 200
The parental role of government in limiting drugs and tobacco 208
Other forms of social alienation 210
162 211
Rights of Racial and Ethnic Persons 211
Rights of Religious Minorities 220
Rights of Children 220
Rights of Young People 220
Rights of the Aging 221
Rights of women 221
Rights of Persons with Disabilities 221
Equal Rights Regardless of Sexual Orientation 222
Population 222
Alcohol and Other Drugs 222
Tobacco 225
Medical Experimentation 225
Genetic Technology 225
Rural Life 232
Sustainable Agriculture 233
Urban-Suburban Life 233
Media Violence and Christian Values 236
Information Communication Technology 236
Persons Living with HIV and AIDS 237
Right to Health Care 238
Organ Transplantation and Donation 239
The Economic Community and Promotion of the General Welfare 240
Biblical passages 240
Moral basis of capitalism 247
The hesitation to believe in capitalism: intellectual framework 258
The hesitation to believe in capitalism: limited government 262
The hesitation to believe in capitalism: value of corporations 266
The hesitation to believe in capitalism: division of labor 269
The hesitation to believe in capitalism: market economics 273
The hesitation to believe in capitalism: trade 277
The hesitation to believe in capitalism: The value of the inequitable distribution of wealth in a free society 281
The hesitation to believe in capitalism: the value of low taxes 295
The hesitation to believe in capitalism: Private property 299
The parental role of government and the alienating effects of poverty 304
The alienating effects of materialistic consumption: greed and envy 317
163 322
Property 323
Collective Bargaining 323

Work and Leisure 325
Consumption 326
Poverty 330
Migrant Workers 331
Gambling 334
Family Farms 337
Corporate Responsibility 345
Trade and Investment 349
The Political Community 351
Biblical passages 352
The Moral Basis of Government in Historical Perspective 357
Is there a parental role for government? 365
Christianity: giving shape to liberal democracy 367
Failures of the churches 377
Failures of liberal democracy 378
Intellectual alienation 387
Signs of a problem 390
To form a more perfect union 395
Separation of church and state 399
Christian involvement in political life 405
To establish justice 424
Capital punishment 437
To insure domestic tranquility 444
To provide for the common defense 456
From Revolution to Cold War 460
Enemy: The Continuing Challenge of Communism 468
Enemy: Muslim Fundamentalism 469
Enemy: Iraq and the War on Terror 476
Enemy: Illegal Immigration 490
Preference for Soft Power 495
To promote the general welfare 500
To secure the blessing of liberty to ourselves and to our posterity 504
164 509
Basic Freedoms and Human Rights 509
Political Responsibility 509
Church and State Relations 509
Freedom of Information 510
Education 512
Civil Obedience and Civil Disobedience 514
The Death Penalty 516
Criminal Justice and Restorative Justice 517
Military Service 518
The World Community 519
Liberal democracy on the world scene 520
America amid the nations 527
War, peace, pacifism, and international institutions 531

Israel amid Arab Lands 549
165 565
Nations and Cultures 566
National Power and Responsibility 567
War and Peace 567
Justice and Law 567
Proposed Social Creed 574
Social Creed 575
General Rules 575
Fundamentalist Worldview – Coalition on Revival 577
Appendix, Nature – Earth Charter 589
Appendix, Politics – Declaration of Independence (partial) 595
Appendix, Politics – US Constitution (portions) 596
Appendix, Politics – Bill of Rights 596
Appendix, Politics – English Bill of Rights 1689 598
Appendix, Politics – French Declaration of the Rights of Man, 1789 604
Appendix, Politics – UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights - 1948 606
Appendix, Politics - The United Nations INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS, 1976 611
Appendix, Politics – UN Declaration on the Elimination of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, 1981 619
Appendix, World Community – UN International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, 1966 (but not yet ratified) 622
Appendix, Politics – European Convention on Human Rights, 1950-1966 627

Introduction

I have been a United Methodist pastor since1979. I have served in the South Indiana Annual Conference. In all of this time, no one asked me to lead a class on the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church. Finally, First United Methodist Church of Crawfordsville asked me to do so, and I thoroughly enjoyed preparing for the class.

I have also always enjoyed engaging matters related politics, economics, social relationships, and the world scene. Consequently, I had already made many conclusions concerning such issues before this class. The way I read in such areas to take notes and start forming my positions.

What I discovered is simple. The section of the social principles of the United Methodist Church that deals with “the nurturing community” is somewhat conservative, by the standards of some other denominations. The rest of the statement largely reflects the positions of the Democrat Party. Of course, based upon my own independent study, I aligned myself closer to limited government, low taxes, less government spending, and a strong national defense, positions usually aligned to the Republican Party. I arrived at this position largely through study of William Buckley, George Will, Adam Smith, John Locke, Immanuel Kant, Milton Friedman, Thomas Sowell, and Walter Williams. The basic instinct I have is that the people need their freedom, and the government, run as it is by quite average folks, needs to have as limited influence upon the lives of citizens as possible. I trace this instinct to growing up in the 1960’s, when I thought one had plenty of reason to distrust government. In particular, many leaders of the Democrat Party protected the racist and segregationist policies of the south, and many in both parties supported the incursion into Vietnam. It seems that many who shared that distrust

concerning government in the 1960's went on to unite with other big government legislators in the early 1970's. I remain un-reconstructed, a person who values individual liberty above what I have come to view as the parental view of government.

The studies presented here are the results of one person reflecting upon the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church and its Book of Resolutions. The format is one where I present my re-statement of the social principles in a brief statement, my studies on the topic presented, including interaction with the documents, and then a section that quotes the social principles and explains any words or phrases that might be confusing. I have also added an appendix that full or partial documents to which the Book of Resolutions refers as the basis for United Methodist positions.

History

The United Methodist Church has a long history of concern for social justice. Its members have often taken forthright positions on controversial issues involving Christian principles. Early Methodists expressed their opposition to the slave trade, to smuggling, and to the cruel treatment of prisoners.

A social creed was adopted by The Methodist Episcopal Church (North) in 1908. Within the next decade similar statements were adopted by The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and by The Methodist Protestant Church. The Evangelical United Brethren Church adopted a statement of social principles in 1946 at the time of the uniting of the United Brethren and The Evangelical Church. In 1972, four years after the uniting in 1968 of The Methodist Church and The Evangelical United Brethren Church, the General Conference of The United Methodist Church adopted a new statement of Social Principles, which was revised in 1976 (and by each successive General Conference).

The Social Principles are a prayerful and thoughtful effort on the part of the General Conference to speak to the human issues in the contemporary world from a sound biblical and theological foundation as historically demonstrated in United Methodist traditions. They are a call to faithfulness and are intended to be instructive and persuasive in the best of the prophetic spirit; however, they are not church law. The Social Principles are a call to all members of The United Methodist Church to a prayerful, studied dialogue of faith and practice. (See ¶ 509.)

My changes in the history section are the following

The United Methodist Church has a long history of showing love and concern toward the culture in which it lives and serves. Its members have often taken forthright positions on controversial issues involving Christian principles. Early Methodists expressed their opposition to the slave trade, to smuggling, and to the cruel treatment of prisoners.

The Methodist Episcopal Church (North) adopted a social creed in 1908. Within the next decade, The Methodist Episcopal Church, South adopted similar statements, and by The Methodist Protestant Church. These creeds arose out of the progressive political movements of the end of the 1800's and the theological movement known as the Social Gospel. The Evangelical United Brethren Church adopted a statement of social principles in 1946 at the time of the uniting of the United Brethren and The Evangelical Church. In 1972, four years after the uniting in 1968 of The Methodist Church and The Evangelical United Brethren Church, the General Conference of The United Methodist Church adopted a new statement of Social Principles, which it revised in 1976 (and by each successive General Conference).

The Social Principles are a prayerful and thoughtful effort on the part of the General Conference to speak to the human issues in the contemporary world from a sound biblical and theological foundation as historically demonstrated in United Methodist traditions. They also continue to speak out of progressive theological and political movements. They are a call to faithfulness. The church intends these principles to be instructive and persuasive. Although the church speaks out of a sense of calling, the social principles are not church law. The Social Principles are a call to all members of The United Methodist Church to a prayerful, studied dialogue of faith and practice.

The Social Principles are statements of principle rather than legislation. They form the principles upon which the denomination invites members, churches, and general committees to engage the world at political and economic levels.

The first efforts among mainline Protestant churches toward clear statements on applying faith to social practice were in the early part of the 1900's. These efforts arose out of the revivalism of the mid 1800's and the Social Gospel movement. The theological grounding of these movements arose from the hope for an improved America. This progressive spirit recognizes that the present is not yet what could be. How can the Christian community help make this country a better place in which to live? There was a rapid growth in purely social issues in American religion after 1865. These concerns included poverty, rights of labor, the liquor traffic, slum housing, and racial bitterness.

The best way to understand this phenomenon is that the quest for perfection joined with compassion for the poor and needy, along with a rebirth of millennial expectation. This concern arose before the civil war. The dominant concern among revival preachers before 1860 was social issues. They believed individual regeneration was a chief means of social reform. It is little wonder that revival preachers believed that the major revival of 1858 would lead to the conquest of social and political evil. This combination led to the dual concern for greater piety along with greater moral action. Further, the revivalist emphasis upon a complete love to God and to the neighbor led to strong social theory and action. Out of the evangelical and perfectionist revivalist movement emerged the Social Gospel of liberal Protestant thought. If God seemed near to the revivalists in America, it was because the revival itself had been such a powerful influence upon the churches and reform movements in the nation. Optimism was everywhere. The most radical perfectionist of them all, John Humphrey Noyes, would predict that revivalism and socialism would be harmonized and working together for the kingdom of heaven. It is to be noted that this belief led to benevolent activities on behalf of the poor, bringing together spiritual and social service.

Theologically, the Social Gospel leaders were overwhelmingly post-millennialist. That is because for the most part, they rejected pre-millennialist theology (which was predominant in the Southern United States), according to which the Second Coming of Christ was imminent, and Christians should devote their energies to preparing for it rather than addressing the issue of social evils. Social Gospel leaders were predominantly a subset of liberal theology and liberal progressive politics.

. The Social Gospel movement was a Protestant Christian intellectual movement that was most prominent in the late 19th century and early 20th century. The relatively unfettered growth of capitalism was a necessary context for the growth of the Social Gospel. The movement applied Christian principles to social problems, especially poverty, inequality, liquor, crime, racial tensions, slums, bad hygiene, poor schools, and the danger of war. The Social Gospel proponents shared the conviction that contemporary Protestantism was too individualistic. The individualistic ethic upon which Protestant thought had depended had begun to break apart. It viewed individualism as blaming the individual for not rising above poverty. The awareness of the need for social unity and human solidarity cast doubt upon previous theology. The ultimate solution of the social problems lay in the great principle of Christian love. They also affirmed the immanence of the divine spirit in the social process and in a gradual refinement of spiritual values that pointed toward the coming of the kingdom. This led to a moderate brand of postmillennialism. They believed the Second Coming could not happen until humankind rid itself of social evils by human effort. The preachers tended to speak for themselves rather than for denominations.

The Social Gospel was a driving force in much of Protestant America. In 1901, the Episcopal Church and the Congregational Church formed commissions to work on issues related to labor. In 1906, the Presbyterian Church called Charles Stelzle to a special work among laboring people. Its Department of Church and Labor became a notable success. The Presbyterians said it best in 1910: [Rogers and Blade 1998]

> The great ends of the church are the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind; the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God; the maintenance of divine worship; the preservation of

> truth; the promotion of social righteousness; and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.

In 1908, the Methodist Episcopal Church, North, adopted a Social Creed.

> The Methodist Episcopal Church stands: For equal rights and complete justice for all men in all stations of life. For the principles of conciliation and arbitration in industrial dissensions. For the protection of the worker from dangerous machinery, occupational diseases, injuries and mortality. For the abolition of child labor. For such regulation of the conditions of labor for women as shall safeguard the physical and moral health of the community. For the suppression of the "sweating system." For the gradual and reasonable reduction of the hours of labor to the lowest practical point, with work for all; and for that degree of leisure for all which is the condition of the highest human life. For a release for [from] employment one day in seven. For a living wage in every industry. For the highest wage that each industry can afford, and for the most equitable division of the products of industry that can ultimately be devised. For the recognition of the Golden Rule and the mind of Christ as the supreme law of society and the sure remedy for all social ills.

Methodist Federation for Social Action (MFSA) was founded in 1907 in an effort to bring added social consciousness to the church.[1] Its Social statements of the United Methodist Church became the forerunner of our Social Creed today. Although MFSA is not an official agency of the church, MFSA was endorsed by the church to be its social conscience. Originally concerned about issues of equal rights, poverty, and labor practices, MFSA in the 1930's became more strident about the evils of capitalism and the need for a classless society.

MFSA's influence in the church was so strong on such matters as pacifism that it was not until 1944 that the Methodist Church officially allowed that in some instances war could be supported (meanwhile fewer than 1% of all Methodist young men declared themselves as pacifists during W.W. II). For many, MFSA's brand of socialism, which included talk about revolution, a classless society and a New Order, looked suspiciously

[1] Riley Case, "What's Happening Around the Church," November 2007.

like communism and it began to draw criticism as in a Reader's Digest article in 1950 entitled "Is There a Pink Fringe in the Methodist Church?"

The General Conference in 1952 repudiated MFSA, made a statement about the right of persons to own property, and formed a new board, the Board of Social and Economic Relations (which has now evolved into the Board of Church and Society), which would speak officially for the church. Many opposed the board because it was feared that conservatives might be elected to the board.

MFSA has always had influence far beyond its modest numbers. A bishop, Francis McConnell served as president of its board for 30 years (1916-1944). Its board has always included bishops and heads of agencies (by contrast no bishops have ever openly identified with the Confessing Movement). In terms of its social and political stances it has frequently been even more liberal than the Democratic Party. For example, none of the current front-running Democratic candidates for president are agitating to redefine marriage and for unilateral immediate withdrawal from Iraq.

Although some people would look at MFSA as the "left-wing" of the church, many in church leadership have ties with MFSA and espouse the same positions. The legislative "priorities" of MFSA appear to support the petitions and the work of the boards and agencies.

MFSA and its fellow travelers in the church stand for "progressive" Christianity. They view the church as an agent for liberal social change. This vision of the church and society would deconstruct traditional Christianity.

The influence of this movement led to the creation of the Federal Council of Churches of Churches in America. In this organization, social Christianity won its place and gained a platform in American Protestantism. However, given those most Protestants were conservative evangelicals who strove to maintain the faith and practice of the past. They regarded the Social Gospel and the Federal Council as dangerous enemies.

In the early 20th century, the poverty level and low quality of living in the slums disgusted many Americans. The Social Gospel movement provided a religious rationale for action to address those concerns. The Social Gospel movement supported the liberal impulses of the time. Activists in the Social Gospel movement hoped that by public health measures as well as enforced schooling so the poor could develop talents and skills, the quality of their moral lives would begin to improve. Important concerns of the Social Gospel movement were labor reforms, such as abolishing child labor and regulating the hours of work by mothers. By 1920, they were crusading against the 12-hour day for men at U.S. Steel. Many reformers inspired by the movement opened settlement houses, most notably Hull House in Chicago operated by Jane Addams. They helped the poor and immigrants improve their lives. Settlement houses offered services such as daycare, education, and health care to needy people in slum neighborhoods.

The progressive movement in politics may have its source in the Protestant passion of redeem the world. Writers and thinkers first used the term “progressive’ in late 19th century America. It referred to a brand of political thought that arose as a response to the vast changes brought by industrialization. Progressive politics was an alternative both to the traditional conservative response to social and economic issues and to the various more or less radical streams of socialism and anarchism that opposed them.

In the United States prior to World War I, the Social Gospel was the religious wing of the progressive movement that had the aim of combating injustice, suffering and poverty in society. They promoted democracy by advocating the direct election of Senators with the 17th Amendment in 1913, Women's right to vote in 1920 with the 19th Amendment, the secret ballot in elections, and ballot initiatives. It sought efficiency in government through exposing corruption and centralization of decision-making. Early progressives split over what to do about large corporations, some advocating trust busting, some advocating regulation, some advocating socialism, and some advocating the free market as the best regulator. They promoted social justice through advocating for labor unions and child labor laws. They advocated for the 18th Amendment of the constitution, the Prohibition Law. Here is an example of the progressive spirit going too far, as later, the twenty-first amendment repealed it. Progressives advocated for environmentalism through national parks and wild life, especially with the election of Theodore Roosevelt.

The Social Gospel and progressive reform movements believed business and wealth created vast social problems that only an enlightened government could solve. Those with legitimate concerns, such as farmers and laborers, came to believe their only hope for progress was a changed government. In particular, Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson increased government involvement in political and economic life. Not until the New Deal and Franklin Roosevelt, however, did the people turn over the levers of government to those who had great faith in their ability to manage the economy from Washington, D. C. The Great Depression made people ready for such a new social experiment. It was an American brand of socialism, a partnership for economic recovery. The federal government became a source of income through Social Security and jobs

through the CCC and other projects, and direct payments to individuals. Washington, D. C. replaced state and local government, as well as private charities. Later, the federal government would take the lead in the battle for Civil Rights, rejecting any notion of the rights of states.

During the New Deal of the 1930s, one can see Social Gospel themes in the work of Harry Hopkins, Will Alexander and Mary McLeod Bethune, who added a new concern with African Americans.

After 1940, the movement withered, but was invigorated in the 1950s by black leaders like Baptist minister Martin Luther King and the civil rights movement. After 1980, it weakened again as a major force inside mainstream churches; indeed those churches were losing strength.

One of the questions that face progressive thinking persons is the extent to which the federal government ought to manage programs. I define progressive thinkers here as people who perceive problems in society and desire to make improvements. I think it quite dangerous for progressive thinkers to assume that a federally managed program for all persons is the best road to resolving the problem. Unfortunately, many people who claim the title “progressive” for themselves assume that a federal program is the solution. The same is true for many conservative politicians. My suggestion is that political conservatives need to agree that the country has some problems to face, and then put forward solutions that allow for diversity and individuality. Political conservatives can then remind people of past progressive mistakes in their reforming zeal. They clearly went too far in prohibition of alcohol. They may have gone too far in defending partial birth abortion. They may have chosen the wrong course in reforming retirement by

setting up a federally managed program instead of setting up a federally mandated program on individuals and companies. Could a federally mandated but privately funded program address the perceived need for retirement security? Could housing for the poor have a better result with vouchers instead of federal urban renewal programs? Could private initiatives be a better resolution to the need for health care than a federally managed program? The point is, the person who simply says “no” to a solution to a problem perceived by others is not helpful here. People want to see their country admit its imperfections and work toward improving the lives of citizens. In a democracy, if a political party persuades people over a long enough time that a problem exists and that they have a solution is the party that will put into effect its vision.

Preamble

We, the people called United Methodists, affirm our faith in God our Creator and Father, in Jesus Christ our Savior, and in the Holy Spirit, our Guide and Guard.

We acknowledge our complete dependence upon God in birth, in life, in death, and in life eternal. Secure in God's love, we affirm the goodness of life and confess our many sins against God's will for us as we find it in Jesus Christ. We have not always been faithful stewards of all that has been committed to us by God the Creator. We have been reluctant followers of Jesus Christ in his mission to bring all persons into a community of love. Though called by the Holy Spirit to become new creatures in Christ, we have resisted the further call to become the people of God in our dealings with each other and the earth on which we live.

Grateful for God's forgiving love, in which we live and by which we are judged, and affirming our belief in the inestimable worth of each individual, we renew our commitment to become faithful witnesses to the gospel, not alone to the ends of earth, but also to the depths of our common life and work.

Here are my changes in the preamble.

United Methodists affirm their faith in God the Father, who is also creator, their love toward the Son, who is Savior and Reconciler, and their hope in the Holy Spirit, their Redeemer, Guide, and Guard.

We acknowledge our complete dependence upon God in birth, in life, in death, and in life eternal. Secure in God's love, we affirm the goodness of life and confess our many sins against God's will for us as we find it in Jesus Christ. We have not always been faithful stewards of all that God the creator has committed to us. We have been reluctant followers of Jesus Christ in his mission to bring all persons into a community of faith, hope, and love. Though called by the Holy Spirit to become transformed people, renewed into the image of Christ, we have resisted the further call to become the people of God in our dealings with each other and the earth on which we live.

Grateful for the forgiving love of God, in which we live and by which God judges us, and affirming our belief in the inestimable worth of each individual, we renew our commitment to become faithful witnesses to the gospel, not alone to the ends of earth, but also to the depths of our common life and work.

One of the common applications Christians have made of the affirmation that God made heaven and earth is that God has a commitment to life. The Father has given life to the world. The Son has given eternal life to those who believe. The Spirit is the life-giving and life sustaining Spirit. The created world also has independent life that has its source in God. God has graciously given existence to other entities, so that they may have an independent life alongside that of God. In particular, God has graciously granted space

and time to each individual entity. In granting independent life to other things, God has also valued the freedom they have, the finite life they have, and the growth they must experience in space and time. As such, God values the life of each individual entity God has made. God is their origin, God is the one that sustains, and God is the one who brings each entity to its fullness. The first statement that Christians make about this world is that God made it, and therefore the world is good. God calls Christians to love properly the world God has made. God is the gardener in the vineyard of the world, fostering and nurturing its continuous evolutionary growth throughout all ages. This view of the action of God in the world is consistent with the traits of the patience and kindness of God in dealing with human beings as related in the Bible. Having called individuality into existence, God respects their independence through persuasion rather than force. Such action is divine because have their source in the love of God, who willed free and independent persons.

The creation of finite entities suggests the tragic character of life. If things begin, they must also end. If things relate to each other, some of those meetings will not be happy ones. As finite things, they do not know everything, and thus may not know how their decisions may influence others in a negative way. Further, the role human beings have played in the world has not always been a good one. We have sinned against the gift of life that God has made. Among the reasons that Christians reflect upon their relationship with the natural and social world is that we experience the alienation and separation that sin has brought into the world. Human rebellion against God has also brought a failure to appreciate the gift of life that we are, and the gifts of life around us.

The Social Principles are an attempt of one Christian body to be among those who restore the value of individual life in all areas, both natural and social.

The Natural World and Insuring Domestic Tranquility

Based upon my study of the Socials Principles of the United Methodist Church in refer to the natural world, I offer my social principles.

All created things have their origin and sustenance in the creative activity of God. Therefore, human beings, using the gift of mind and rational discourse, are morally responsible for the way they relate to the natural world. Human beings are stewards of the created world, especially, the portion of the world over which they have direct influence. Churches and Christians need to recognize that both economic and political freedoms are the best protectors of the environment. Thus, calls for sustainable and equitable approaches that result in the coercive use of government power to compel behavior by business and individuals will be to the detriment of the quality of human life and the protection of plant and animal life. The best government can do for the protection of the environment is to protect individual, intellectual, economic, and political freedom. This protection includes the protection of the rights of private property. Further, while international agreements can encourage cross-cultural conversation, Americans need to recognize that many of the nations of the world remain governed by various forms of tyranny. Such governments have no moral claim upon free societies. Although the means of proper stewardship will change as human knowledge increases, one might consider the following possibilities.

- Show respect to natural ecosystems, while encouraging development that enhances human life.
- Protect species of plant and animal life where possible.
- Use technology to reduce the human suffering to which human history is a tragic testimony.
- Recognize that increasing wealth, education, and technology generally leads to reduction of the birthrate, and thus to less use of the resources of the earth.
- Encourage Christians to consider consumption of goods, services, and energy, as a potential witness to the world of how they gain their sense of self-worth from God, rather than from accumulation of wealth.
- Encourage Christians to adopt a lifestyle that reflects the gospel, in contrast to what Americans often presented in the entertainment industry, media, and other sources of information.
- Support the continuing quest for healthy disposal of waste.
- Accept the use of chemicals in the growth of agriculture, while continuing to encourage the option of organic farming.
- Use all available, non-human resources possible to develop needed energy resources for the improvement of the human condition.
- Encourage the conservation of energy as responsible Christian stewards of the resources of the earth.

- Encourage respectful treatment of animals, although this principle ought not to discourage the use of animals in research that improves the health and life of human beings.
- Encourage the exploration of space, for it, too, is part of the world that God created. It deserves the same respect that human beings owe to all of God's creation.
- Accept and encourage scientific exploration into human knowledge of the world God made. Christian communities ought to engage scientific and other social, economic, and political communities in the moral uses of such knowledge.
- Encourage the safety of the food supply. Recognize that use of chemicals may enhance the food supply.

Biblical Reflections

The teaching of the church concerning creation arises out of biblical affirmations concerning God as the origin, the preserver, and the consummator, of creation. It would be difficult to avoid the implication of several passages in the Bible.

Genesis 1:1-2:4a
1 In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, 2 the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. 3 Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. 4 And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day. 6 And God said, "Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." 7 So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. 8 God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day. 9 And God said, "Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. 10 God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. 11 Then God said, "Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it." And it was so. 12 The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. 13 And there was evening and there was morning, the third day. 14 And God said, "Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, 15 and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth." And it was so. 16 God made the two great lights-- the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night-- and the stars. 17 God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, 18 to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. 19 And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day. 20 And God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome

of the sky." 21 So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. 22 God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." 23 And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day. 24 And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind." And it was so. 25 God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good. 26 Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." 27 So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. 28 God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." 29 God said, "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. 30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. 31 God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. 2:1 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. 2 And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. 3 So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation. 4 These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

Genesis 2:4b-25
4 In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, 5 when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up-- for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground; 6 but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground-- 7 then the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being. 8 And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. 9 Out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. 10 A river flows out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four branches. 11 The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; 12 and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. 13 The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Cush. 14 The name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates. 15 The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; 17 but of the tree

of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die." 18 Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner." 19 So out of the ground the LORD God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. 20 The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. 21 So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. 22 And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. 23 Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called Woman, for out of Man this one was taken." 24 Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh. 25 And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

Psalm 104
1 Bless the LORD, O my soul.
O LORD my God, you are very great.
You are clothed with honor and majesty,
2 wrapped in light as with a garment.
You stretch out the heavens like a tent,
3 you set the beams of your chambers on the waters,
you make the clouds your chariot,
you ride on the wings of the wind,
4 you make the winds your messengers,
fire and flame your ministers.
5 You set the earth on its foundations,
so that it shall never be shaken.
6 You cover it with the deep as with a garment;
the waters stood above the mountains.
7 At your rebuke they flee;
at the sound of your thunder they take to flight.
8 They rose up to the mountains,
ran down to the valleys to the place that you appointed for them.
9 You set a boundary that they may not pass,
so that they might not again cover the earth.
10 You make springs gush forth in the valleys;
they flow between the hills,
11 giving drink to every wild animal;
the wild asses quench their thirst.
12 By the streams the birds of the air have their habitation;
they sing among the branches.
13 From your lofty abode you water the mountains;
the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work.
14 You cause the grass to grow for the cattle,
and plants for people to use, to bring forth food from the earth,

15 and wine to gladden the human heart,
oil to make the face shine,
and bread to strengthen the human heart.
16 The trees of the LORD are watered abundantly,
the cedars of Lebanon that he planted.
17 In them the birds build their nests;
the stork has its home in the fir trees.
18 The high mountains are for the wild goats;
the rocks are a refuge for the coneys.
19 You have made the moon to mark the seasons;
the sun knows its time for setting.
20 You make darkness, and it is night,
when all the animals of the forest come creeping out.
21 The young lions roar for their prey,
seeking their food from God.
22 When the sun rises, they withdraw and lie down in their dens.
23 People go out to their work and to their labor until the evening.
24 O LORD, how manifold are your works!
In wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.
25 Yonder is the sea, great and wide,
creeping things innumerable are there,
living things both small and great.
26 There go the ships, and Leviathan that you formed to sport in it.
27 These all look to you to give them their food in due season;
28 when you give to them, they gather it up;
when you open your hand, they are filled with good things.
29 When you hide your face, they are dismayed;
when you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust.
30 When you send forth your spirit, they are created;
and you renew the face of the ground.
31 May the glory of the LORD endure forever;
may the LORD rejoice in his works—
32 who looks on the earth and it trembles,
who touches the mountains and they smoke.
33 I will sing to the LORD as long as I live;
I will sing praise to my God while I have being.
34 May my meditation be pleasing to him, for I rejoice in the LORD.
35 Let sinners be consumed from the earth,
and let the wicked be no more.
Bless the LORD, O my soul.
Praise the LORD!

Psalm 8
1 <To the leader: according to The Gittith. A Psalm of David.>
O LORD, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

You have set your glory above the heavens.
2 Out of the mouths of babes and infants you have founded a bulwark
because of your foes, to silence the enemy and the avenger.
3 When I look at your heavens,
the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars that you have established;
4 what are human beings that you are mindful of them,
mortals that you care for them?
5 Yet you have made them a little lower than God,
and crowned them with glory and honor.
6 You have given them dominion over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under their feet,
7 all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field,
8 the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea,
whatever passes along the paths of the seas.
9 O LORD, our Sovereign,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Psalm 19:1-6
1 <To the leader. A Psalm of David.>
The heavens are telling the glory of God;
and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.
2 Day to day pours forth speech,
and night to night declares knowledge.
3 There is no speech, nor are there words;
their voice is not heard;
4 yet their voice goes out through all the earth,
and their words to the end of the world.
In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun,
5 which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy,
and like a strong man runs its course with joy.
6 Its rising is from the end of the heavens,
and its circuit to the end of them;
and nothing is hid from its heat.

Job 38-39
38 1 Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind: 2 "Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? 3 Gird up your loins like a man, I will question you, and you shall declare to me. 4 "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. 5 Who determined its measurements-- surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? 6 On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone 7 when the morning stars sang together and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy? 8 "Or who shut in the sea with doors when it burst out from the womb?-- 9 when I made the clouds its garment, and thick darkness its swaddling band, 10 and prescribed bounds for it, and set bars and doors, 11 and said, 'Thus far shall you come, and no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stopped'? 12 "Have you commanded

the morning since your days began, and caused the dawn to know its place, 13 so that it might take hold of the skirts of the earth, and the wicked be shaken out of it? 14 It is changed like clay under the seal, and it is dyed like a garment. 15 Light is withheld from the wicked, and their uplifted arm is broken. 16 "Have you entered into the springs of the sea, or walked in the recesses of the deep? 17 Have the gates of death been revealed to you, or have you seen the gates of deep darkness? 18 Have you comprehended the expanse of the earth? Declare, if you know all this. 19 "Where is the way to the dwelling of light, and where is the place of darkness, 20 that you may take it to its territory and that you may discern the paths to its home? 21 Surely you know, for you were born then, and the number of your days is great! 22 "Have you entered the storehouses of the snow, or have you seen the storehouses of the hail, 23 which I have reserved for the time of trouble, for the day of battle and war? 24 What is the way to the place where the light is distributed, or where the east wind is scattered upon the earth? 25 "Who has cut a channel for the torrents of rain, and a way for the thunderbolt, 26 to bring rain on a land where no one lives, on the desert, which is empty of human life, 27 to satisfy the waste and desolate land, and to make the ground put forth grass? 28 "Has the rain a father, or who has begotten the drops of dew? 29 From whose womb did the ice come forth, and who has given birth to the hoarfrost of heaven? 30 The waters become hard like stone, and the face of the deep is frozen. 31 "Can you bind the chains of the Pleiades, or loose the cords of Orion? 32 Can you lead forth the Mazzaroth in their season, or can you guide the Bear with its children? 33 Do you know the ordinances of the heavens? Can you establish their rule on the earth? 34 "Can you lift up your voice to the clouds, so that a flood of waters may cover you? 35 Can you send forth lightnings, so that they may go and say to you, 'Here we are'? 36 Who has put wisdom in the inward parts, or given understanding to the mind? 37 Who has the wisdom to number the clouds? Or who can tilt the waterskins of the heavens, 38 when the dust runs into a mass and the clods cling together? 39 "Can you hunt the prey for the lion, or satisfy the appetite of the young lions, 40 when they crouch in their dens, or lie in wait in their covert? 41 Who provides for the raven its prey, when its young ones cry to God, and wander about for lack of food?
39 1 "Do you know when the mountain goats give birth? Do you observe the calving of the deer? 2 Can you number the months that they fulfill, and do you know the time when they give birth, 3 when they crouch to give birth to their offspring, and are delivered of their young? 4 Their young ones become strong, they grow up in the open; they go forth, and do not return to them. 5 "Who has let the wild ass go free? Who has loosed the bonds of the swift ass, 6 to which I have given the steppe for its home, the salt land for its dwelling place? 7 It scorns the tumult of the city; it does not hear the shouts of the driver. 8 It ranges the mountains as its pasture, and it searches after every green thing. 9 "Is the wild ox willing to serve you? Will it spend the night at your crib? 10 Can you tie it in the furrow with ropes, or will it harrow the valleys after you? 11 Will you depend on it because its strength is great, and will you hand over your labor to it? 12 Do you have faith in it that it will return, and bring your grain to your threshing floor? 13 "The ostrich's wings flap wildly, though its pinions lack plumage. 14 For it leaves its eggs to the earth, and lets them be warmed on the ground, 15 forgetting that a foot may crush them, and that a wild animal may trample them. 16 It deals cruelly with its young, as if they were not its own; though its labor should be in vain, yet it has no fear; 17 because God has made it forget wisdom, and given it no share in understanding. 18 When it

spreads its plumes aloft, it laughs at the horse and its rider. 19 "Do you give the horse its might? Do you clothe its neck with mane? 20 Do you make it leap like the locust? Its majestic snorting is terrible. 21 It paws violently, exults mightily; it goes out to meet the weapons. 22 It laughs at fear, and is not dismayed; it does not turn back from the sword. 23 Upon it rattle the quiver, the flashing spear, and the javelin. 24 With fierceness and rage it swallows the ground; it cannot stand still at the sound of the trumpet. 25 When the trumpet sounds, it says 'Aha!' From a distance it smells the battle, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting. 26 "Is it by your wisdom that the hawk soars, and spreads its wings toward the south? 27 Is it at your command that the eagle mounts up and makes its nest on high? 28 It lives on the rock and makes its home in the fastness of the rocky crag. 29 From there it spies the prey; its eyes see it from far away. 30 Its young ones suck up blood; and where the slain are, there it is."

Proverbs 8:22-36
22 The LORD created me [wisdom] at the beginning of his work,
the first of his acts of long ago.
23 Ages ago I was set up,
at the first, before the beginning of the earth.
24 When there were no depths I was brought forth,
when there were no springs abounding with water.
25 Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills,
I was brought forth—
26 when he had not yet made earth and fields,
or the world's first bits of soil.
27 When he established the heavens, I was there,
when he drew a circle on the face of the deep,
28 when he made firm the skies above,
when he established the fountains of the deep,
29 when he assigned to the sea its limit,
so that the waters might not transgress his command,
when he marked out the foundations of the earth,
30 then I was beside him, like a master worker;
and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always,
31 rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the human race.
32 And now, my children, listen to me:
happy are those who keep my ways.
33 Hear instruction and be wise, and do not neglect it.
34 Happy is the one who listens to me,
watching daily at my gates, waiting beside my doors.
35 For whoever finds me finds life and obtains favor from the LORD;
36 but those who miss me injure themselves; all who hate me love death."

Isaiah 40:25-31
25 To whom then will you compare me, or who is my equal?
says the Holy One.
26 Lift up your eyes on high and see:

Who created these?
He who brings out their host and numbers them,
calling them all by name;
because he is great in strength, mighty in power,
not one is missing.
27 Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel,
"My way is hidden from the LORD,
and my right is disregarded by my God"?
28 Have you not known? Have you not heard?
The LORD is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He does not faint or grow weary;
his understanding is unsearchable.
29 He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless.
30 Even youths will faint and be weary,
and the young will fall exhausted;
31 but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength,
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
they shall run and not be weary,
they shall walk and not faint.

For the Christian, further emphasis upon the importance of creation arises due to the connection of Christ with creation. Christ stands as God and with God before and above the beginning as God is the beginning. These texts ascribe to Christ the position, dignity, and power of the Creator.

> Colossians 1:15 (NRSV)
> [15] He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation;
> Colossians 1:16 (NRSV)
> [16] for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him.
> Colossians 1:17 (NRSV)
> [17] He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together.
> Colossians 2:10 (NRSV)
> [10] and you have come to fullness in him, who is the head of every ruler and authority.
> John 1:1 (NRSV)
> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
> John 1:10 (NRSV)
> [10] He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him.

John 1:11 (NRSV)
[11] He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him.
John 5:17 (NRSV)
[17] But Jesus answered them, “My Father is still working, and I also am working.”
John 5:19 (NRSV)
[19] Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, the Son can do nothing on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise.
John 16:15 (NRSV)
[15] All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.
John 17:2 (NRSV)
[2] since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.
1 John 1:1 (NRSV)
We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—
1 John 2:13-14 (NRSV)
[13] I am writing to you, fathers,
because you know him who is from the beginning.
I am writing to you, young people,
because you have conquered the evil one.
[14] I write to you, children,
because you know the Father.
I write to you, fathers,
because you know him who is from the beginning.
I write to you, young people,
because you are strong
and the word of God abides in you,
and you have overcome the evil one.
Hebrews 1:2 (NRSV)
[2] but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds.
Hebrews 1:3 (NRSV)
[3] He is the reflection of God’s glory and the exact imprint of God’s very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,
1 Corinthians 8:6 (NRSV)
[6] yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.
Revelation 3:14 (NRSV)
[14] “And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the origin of God’s creation:

Theology and Creation

Human beings are among the things that God has created. God is the origin of all that exists. Therefore, as creatures of God, every created thing has a connection with every other created thing. The interconnectedness of created things has its primary reality in their origin in the action of God.

Given the fact that human beings have a special relationship to God, human beings have a unique responsibility to extend the same love to this world that God showed in creating it. People are responsible for how they treat the other things that God has created.

As always, human beings must learn to value things and people for both aesthetic reasons as well as utilitarian reasons. Each entity in the world has value in itself, as well as usefulness toward human ends.

Human beings have a moral obligation to care for their environment. However, the moral concern for the quality of life for all God's creation is a higher order of moral reflection. Frankly, it requires the luxury of time and leisure that modern society provides. People concerned with their survival generally do not give much thought to whether they have acted morally toward other parts of creation. However, if nothing else, human beings recognize that their individual and communal survival depends upon the plant and animal life that surrounds them. Human beings are part of nature. Nature is not always a pretty place. It contains at least an element of "survival of the fittest." The social hierarchy of many animal societies requires violence to maintain the top of the society. One species preys upon another for survival. As part of nature, human beings are part of

this struggle for life. People can live in reasonable harmony with nature by fulfilling natural desires. Doing malicious violence to nature will eventually recoil back upon those who do it.

One way to think of this from a moral perspective is that human beings are present for a brief time. They are present to the people and things around them briefly. They have moral responsibility to show the same love and care for the world that God has. Humanity often works with nature to make the world increasingly like a home. Human beings must also fight back animal competitors and vegetative life in order to carve out space for human communities. In particular, modern society seeks the improvement of daily life for the masses. Science and technology provide opportunities that previous generations could hardly have imagined. Yet, such advances occur because of increased knowledge about the world, especially about atoms, cells, and chemical reactions. Increased knowledge of economic and political life continues as a challenge.

The world is the handiwork of God. In creation, wherever we turn we meet the work of God. If we have eyes to see, we can see the face of God everywhere we turn. We need to reflect upon God's intent and design in creating it. The ability to reflect, the ability to engage in reasonable thought and discourse with others, is a gift of God. In our romantic and wistful moments, we can become quite eloquent about what we can learn from created things. Yet, we are the ones who must of the capacity to have open minds and hearts to animals and plants for what they can teach us. In other words, created things are not gods speaking to us in the way pagan and animalistic religions thought (and think). Rather, we must take ownership for the insights that such reflection teaches us.

Contemplation on the fact that God has provided humanity with everything necessary for a meaningful, happy life leads us to consider the architect of the world, as well as our confidence in and thanksgiving toward God. Human beings are in intimate part of nature. Human beings are not alien to the ongoing creative process of God as seen in evolution. This world, this universe, is the only home people will know in these bodies.

Modern science can become a proper text for Christian theology in that it can help the theologian mold his or her understanding of the handiwork of God. Theology must reflect upon creation from the standpoint of current knowledge of the world for a description of the divine work of creation, using the scientific resources at hand. In doing so, we follow the pattern provided by Genesis 1-3, which utilized its contemporary knowledge of the world in order to frame its theological construction. In the process, theology can contribute to the discussion of how to use technology toward proper ends. The importance of finitude and temporality for creation is one that theology can appreciate. The importance of growth for the evolution of the universe suggests that each part of space and time is important to God and has meaning in the context of the end toward which it advances. Finite things also have independence and freedom, both of which are gifts of God. It also suggests the community of entities, interdependent, and connected in unexpected ways. The role of God in this process seems to be a persuasive one. God has elected to enter into relationship with finite, temporal, independent, free, and sinful creatures. What a profound example of the patience of God.

Ethical considerations

For the sake of our life together, science, communities, and religious communities, need to remain in dialogue with each other to determine proper courses of action. Simply because science describes a process whereby human beings can do something does not mean that human beings should do it. Such decisions require the involvement of all participants in modern society. The churches need to have a place at that table. The use of natural resources to improve human life has unforeseen effects upon other species. Humanity even becomes a danger to itself. Proper harmonization of human need with nature is an important way for human beings to increase their awareness and care for what is beyond them. Human beings do not stand aloof from nature, but rather are in intimate communion with it. Even surrounding oneself with things constructed by people still recognizes the web of natural and human relationships that brought produce them. The recognition of this web of relationships leads us to care for all living things in their proper sphere. Plants and animals sustain human life, as do human beings often sustain the lives of plants and animals. The nurture and care for the natural environment has led to preservation of many species that might normally have died out long ago. Over the centuries, human beings have also generated new breeds within species. In many ways, science has speeded up the process of evolution. Processes that may have taken millions of years human beings have understood and implemented for the improvement of life. We see this early on in breeding of animals, and has continued with the profound impact of understanding the structure of the gene. Although we need much care in the implementation of human knowledge, such advances are important for the improvement of human life.

Many people do not want to admit what history has shown. The use of natural resources that accompanies modern growth protects that which creates income. Thus, it protects farmable land, it will protect air and water, and it will protect renewable resources (whether trees or animals) as long as they continue to have value. We can observe this in the difference in ecological care taken in the USA, Canada, and Western Europe on the one hand and the Iron Curtain nations and Russia on the other. Improved technology brings greater care for the environment. Here is the point the point that many people ideologically committed to socialist answers rather than free enterprise answers. Ownership of property means that people have responsibility for their limited piece of the world. Too many persons do not take this responsibility seriously. One can see this truth in the shoddy way some individuals and communities care for their property. However, many persons find ways of expressing their sense of self-worth and dignity through what they own. They recognize the opportunity that ownership brings in creatively expresses the uniqueness that belongs to each person. As a part of nature, most human beings recognize their dependence upon keeping the earth friendly to human habitation. The coming of private property helps preserve the earth as well. As we own anything, we care for it and seek the increase of its value. Pride of ownership encourages proper use of all the resources we have, including the land.

Further, political liberty seems to work. Meaningful involvement of citizens in the choice of government leaders aids in meaningful participation throughout society. It increases the sense of personal worth and dignity, and gives the opportunity to offer such respect to others. Society does not need a small group of people legislating what it deems proper use of technology. What humanity does need is a society rooted in liberty, with

individuals making varied and contradictory choices. What humanity needs from religious communities is the attempt to persuade through moral reasoning the adoption of proper lifestyles.

It ought not to surprise anyone that Christian teaching generally urges all Christians to order their lives as a godly steward of the portion of the world over which they have influence. Christians may need to re-shape their lives as godly stewards of the natural world. Such reshaping might begin with a few simple steps.

One simple step is to spend time in nature, appreciating it all its complexity, ambiguity, terror (hurricanes, floods, etc.), and its beauty.

Another step is for Christians to learn to incorporate theological and biblical language into their appreciation for the world, something I hope this essay has done.

Another step is to reflect prayerfully upon human interconnection with the rest of creation, hopefully leading to reflection upon Christian responsibility for the role they play in nature.

Another proper step one could take is to listen to those who work the land. City churches could listen to rural churches for what they have experienced in nature.

Caring for portions of nature through plants and pets in our homes can also lead us to caring for nature in profound ways. On a personal level, in 2007, I had the experience of putting to death our standard poodle, Beau. He had a natural show stance. He had a wonderful prance when he ran with me. We had stairs, and he made a game of who could be the first to reach the top. He had a bit of the mischief-maker in him. For example, if you fixed some food in the kitchen and brought it out to eat, he would quietly go back to the kitchen and see if you had left some food on the counter. He was big

enough that getting the food would not be much of a problem. Well, he developed a form of cancer. He slowly weakened, had bowel problems, and spent much of his time in the coolest part of the home, the bathroom. He did not appear to be in pain, but we could certainly see the change in his behavior. In the morning, we took him for his last ride. Normally, he was so excited. This time, he needed help getting in our SUV. He sat in the back with my wife. He put his head on her lap as we drove around for what we knew would be the last time. We brought him to the vet. The vet showed great care toward us as he brought us back to his office. As soon as he closed the door, Beau dropped to the floor. This brief activity had worn him out. My wife sat behind him. I sat in front of him. He lifted his head, took one look at me, and put his head on her lap. Both of us cried (as I am as I write this paragraph) as the vet put the needle into his leg and injected the chemical that would stop his heart. It happened quickly and quietly. We left the office, walked toward our SUV, and held each other, crying. We missed him. He had been part of our family for ten years.

Regardless of our political ideology, at some level, all of us care for our environment. The reader may disagree with some of my Social Principles. Please understand the simple point that both of us can care for the natural world, even if we disagree on the ways we would express our social principles concerning it. In particular, political differences in America are deep. I hope we can agree that regardless of our political commitments, at some level, all of us care for the natural world. We are part of that natural world.

Show respect to natural ecosystems, while encouraging development that enhances human life.

Protect species of plant and animal life where possible.

Use technology to reduce the human suffering to which human history is a tragic testimony.

Recognize that increasing wealth, education, and technology generally leads to reduction of the birthrate, and thus to less use of the resources of the earth.

Encourage Christians to consider consumption of goods, services, and energy, as a potential witness to the world of how they gain their sense of self-worth from God, rather than from accumulation of wealth.

Encourage Christians to adopt a lifestyle that reflects the gospel, in contrast to what Americans often presented in the entertainment industry, media, and other sources of information.

Support the continuing quest for healthy disposal of waste.

Accept the use of chemicals in the growth of agriculture, while continuing to encourage the option of organic farming.

Use all available, non-human resources possible to develop needed energy resources for the improvement of the human condition.

Encourage the conservation of energy as responsible Christian stewards of the resources of the earth.

Encourage respectful treatment of animals, although this principle ought not to discourage the use of animals in research that improves the health and life of human beings.

Encourage the exploration of space, for it, too, is part of the world that God created. It deserves the same respect that human beings owe to all of God’s creation.

Accept and encourage scientific exploration into human knowledge of the world God made. Christian communities ought to engage scientific and other social, economic, and political communities in the moral uses of such knowledge.

Encourage the safety of the food supply. Recognize that use that the use of chemicals may enhance the food supply.

160

All creation is the Lord's, and we are responsible for the ways we use and abuse it. Water, air, soil, minerals, energy resources, plants, animal life, and space are to be valued and conserved because they are God's creation and not solely because they are useful to human beings. God has granted us stewardship of creation. We should meet these stewardship duties through acts of loving care and respect. Economic, political, social, and technological developments have increased our human numbers, and lengthened and enriched our lives. However, these developments have led to regional defoliation, dramatic extinction of species, massive human suffering, overpopulation, and misuse and overconsumption of natural and nonrenewable resources, particularly by industrialized societies. This continued course of action jeopardizes the natural heritage that God has entrusted to all generations. Therefore, let us recognize the responsibility of the church and its members to place a high priority on changes in economic, political, social, and technological lifestyles to support a more ecologically equitable and sustainable world leading to a higher quality of life for all of God's creation.

Suggested changes 160 All creation is the Lord's, and we are responsible for the ways we use and abuse it. Water, air, soil, minerals, energy resources, plants, animal life, and space are to be valued and conserved because they are God's creation and not solely because they are useful to human beings. God has granted us stewardship of creation. We should meet these stewardship duties through acts of loving care and respect. Economic, political, social, and technological developments have increased our human numbers, and lengthened and enriched our lives. However, as with all human creations, human beings have used these developments to bring regional defoliation, dramatic extinction of species, massive human suffering, overpopulation, and misuse and overconsumption of natural and nonrenewable resources. This continued course of action jeopardizes the natural heritage that God has entrusted to all generations. Therefore, let us recognize the responsibility of the church and its members to place a high priority on changes in their economic, political, social, and technological lifestyles that will properly witness to the world of our stewardship of the natural world, leading to a higher quality of life for all of God's creation. We have confidence that proper use of technology will overcome these problems.

I would now like to offer a few specific comments upon specific terms in paragraph 160.

It would seem reasonable not to use technology to engage in "regional defoliation," the removal of leaves from plants using chemical agents.

It would also seem reasonable not to use technology to cause the "dramatic extinction of species." In fact, it would seem reasonable for the government to encourage private landowners to protect and provide habitat. Respect for property rights and encouragement by government to be good stewards of land they own might be the best way to preserve endangered species. One can find out more about this approach at www.cei.org.

"Massive human suffering" is the record of human history. Sadly, the nations that have embraced liberty and respect for private property are few. Political systems rooted in dictatorship and tyranny has been the source of much of this suffering. Limiting the freedom of citizens increases suffering.

"Overpopulation" in certain areas of the world is often the result of culture and religion.

"Misuse and overconsumption of natural and nonrenewable resources" is the result of human selfishness. The desire to acquire stuff is strong. The use of the things of this world for immoral purposes and toward self-destructive ends is always with us. Christian stewardship requires that the church raise the question. Yet, what are the criteria for determining in what overconsumption consists?

Sadly, our Social Principles blame "especially" the technological development of "industrial societies" for the above dangers. This is not a principle with which I can

agree. The reality is that increased technology, when combined with the education it requires and the liberty with which it thrives, will lead to increased moral reflection upon the care human beings extend to the world. The reality is that primitive societies are more susceptible to overpopulation, for example. The concern for the negative impact of industrial societies is actually an attack upon private property.

The "natural heritage," I assume, is the natural world that is the home of human beings. However, how could human technology, especially by industrial societies, put it in jeopardy? I do not want to put too fine a point on this, but the natural world is not in fundamental danger from human activity. I think it quite arrogant for any human being to think it could be. Human beings would die long before the natural world would die because of anything people did to it. In fact, if technology put humanity at risk, my guess is that human beings have enough interest in self-preservation to create better technology that would counteract what they have done. The best way to advance toward clean environment is liberal democracy, for the technology generated by that social world will preserve the natural world. We do not face a crisis that is of such a nature that we must save creation, for the only part of the earth under threat at all is humanity. The earth will go on, no matter what humanity does to itself. Humanity did not bring the universe into existence. It cannot bring even this tiny planet to its death.

The concern for "ecologically equitable and sustainable world" is one that derives largely from United Nations studies that began in the 1980's. Sustainable development means balancing the fulfillment of human needs with the protection of the natural environment so that these needs can be met not only in the present, but in the indefinite future. This linkage between environment and development was first set rolling in a

major way only in 1980, when the International Union for the Conservation of Nature published the World Conservation Strategy and used the term ‘sustainable development’. The concept went on to find its most august expression in the 1987 report of the Brundtland Commission – formally, the World Commission on Environment and Development. Set up by the United Nations General Assembly, Brundtland coined what has become the most often-quoted definition of sustainable development as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. One of the representatives of this movement is the Earth Charter. Its preamble states the following.

> We stand at a critical moment in Earth's history, a time when humanity must choose its future. As the world becomes increasingly interdependent and fragile, the future at once holds great peril and great promise. To move forward we must recognize that in the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one Earth community with a common destiny. We must join together to bring forth a sustainable global society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace. Towards this end, it is imperative that we, the peoples of Earth, declare our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life, and to future generations.

A. Water, Air, Soil, Minerals, Plants

We support and encourage social policies that serve to reduce and control the creation of industrial byproducts and waste; facilitate the safe processing and disposal of toxic and nuclear waste and move toward the elimination of both; encourage reduction of municipal waste; provide for appropriate recycling and disposal of municipal waste; and assist the cleanup of polluted air, water, and soil. We call for the preservation of old-growth forests and other irreplaceable natural treasures, as well as preservation of endangered plant species. We support measures designed to maintain and restore natural ecosystems. We support policies that develop alternatives to chemicals used for growing, processing, and preserving food, and we strongly urge adequate research into their effects upon God's creation prior to utilization. We urge development of international agreements concerning equitable utilization of the world's resources for human benefit so long as the integrity of the earth is maintained.

Proper disposal of waste products has long been a concern of civilization. It remains a problem for modern societies. Industrial waste, toxic waste, nuclear waste, and municipal waste are particular matters that scientists need to resolve. These wastes affect the quality of air, water, and soil.

The Social Principles call for the preservation of "old growth forests." The danger of this principle is that the preservation could also lead to the preservation of poverty and primitive society. For example, Brazil does not intend to keep its people in poverty so that certain people in America can feel good about preserving the "old growth forests" of the Amazon. If they need to develop that forest for economic growth, they will do so. Technology has led to fewer acres suffering erosion and larger forested acres today than in the mid-1800. Yet, our Social Principles side with those who believe that technology is destroying the environment. The fact is that the more economically advanced a nation is the cleaner is the environment. Totalitarian regimes and poor countries live in greater environmental crisis than the industrialized West. Wealthier is healthier.

The Social Principles suggest the protection of other "irreplaceable natural treasures" and "endangered plant species." Such higher order moral reasoning requires the technology, luxury, and leisure to reflect upon the moral connection a human being has with other parts of creation. However, to expect people and societies that are poor to care about such moral considerations is probably unrealistic. The point is that such a Social Principle requires a modern cultural context.

The Social Principles are on the side of maintaining and restoring "natural ecosystems." An ecosystem can be land or aquatic. The proper preservation of such naturally occurring systems has long been American policy.

The Social Principles side with those who have concern about the chemicals used for growing, processing, and preserving food. On the personal level, I can understand the concern, while also recognizing that since the coming of chemicals to food, human life span has increased. I have also talked with people in the agriculture industry. They have shared with me that the only way farmers can feed 300 million people is with chemicals. However, because of research on improving the seed used in growing crops, the country has reduced the amount of chemicals used. Chemicals increase the productivity of the land. A corn bore is the number one threat to crops, and chemicals address that threat.

The Social Principles urge international agreements concerning equitable utilization of the world's resources while maintaining the integrity of the earth. I have no inside knowledge on the discussion of this statement. I suspect that an international agreement like that of the Earth Charter is what the denomination has in mind. The Earth Charter is a declaration of fundamental values and principles for building a just, sustainable, and peaceful global society in the 21st century. The Earth Charter's inclusive ethical vision proposes that environmental protection, human rights, equitable human development, and peace are interdependent and indivisible. It provides a framework for thinking about and addressing these issues. One can read the whole charter at http://www.earthcharter.org/files/charter/charter.pdf. Its sixteen principles urge sustainable societies, protect the integrity of the ecosystems of the earth, has a concern for biological diversity, study ecological sustainability, human development occur in sustainable and equitable manner, work into educational systems the values and skills necessary for a sustainable way of life. My concern is that such objectives can move against the other concern of the charter for democracy, respect for life, and tolerance. The

document makes little mention of the concern to protect individual liberty or property. My concern is simple: who will enforce upon every individual the values of a sustainable way of life? I see no way to do so without severe encroachment upon both liberty and property.

B. Energy Resources Utilization

Affirming the inherent value of nonhuman creation, we support and encourage social policies that are directed toward rational and restrained transformation of parts of the nonhuman world into energy for human usage and that de-emphasize or eliminate energy-producing technologies that endanger the health, the safety, and even the existence of the present and future human and nonhuman creation. Further, we urge wholehearted support of the conservation of energy and responsible development of all energy resources, with special concern for the development of renewable energy sources, that the goodness of the earth may be affirmed.

I would like to offer a discussion of the individual themes mentioned in this Social Principle.

Human beings, existing at least as atoms and cells, need energy to survive, as do all living things. The nonhuman world of plants and animals also consists of atoms and cells that human beings require for their sustenance. In the process, human beings have a moral obligation to themselves, to others, to the rest of creation, and to future generations, to provide for themselves in a way that does nothing to endanger the health, safety, and lives of others.

The Social Principles urge proper conservation of energy.

The Social Principles urge responsible development of all energy resources, with special concern for renewable energy resources. Renewable technologies are geothermal and hydropower, as well as solar power, wind and biofuel. As important as these energy resources could be, if I read it correctly, I am glad that among our principles is the development of all energy resources. This principle includes fossil fuels. In principle, for

America, this could support efforts to develop Alaska oil and oil in the Gulf and other offshore areas.

In all our ways of changing our environment, we have a moral obligation to affirm the goodness of the earth.

C. Animal Life

We support regulations that protect the life and health of animals, including those ensuring the humane treatment of pets and other domestic animals, animals used in research, and the painless slaughtering of meat animals, fish, and fowl. We encourage the preservation of all animal species including those threatened with extinction.

I would like to offer a brief discussion of this Social Principle.

Clearly, human beings have a moral obligation to respect creation. Human beings make moral choices in their interactions with each other and in their relation to creation. Given that only human beings have duties and moral obligations, only human beings have rights.

Applied to animal life, human beings have a relative obligation to protect the life and health animals. In particular, when we bring pets into our homes, we have an obligation to respect them. Concern for the preservation of species is one that has a long history within America, as well as in international treaties. One of the reasons that elephant herds are increasing in South Africa is that it became legal to sell elephant products. The point is that if human beings have an economic interest in the preservation of species the likelihood is that they will continue to survive as a species. Human beings can use animals for food, as entertainment, and in research, though human beings may nevertheless have an obligation to ensure they do suffer only as necessary. One might call

this the animal welfare position, the position held by some of the oldest animal protection agencies.

I have no inside information on the formation of this Social Principle. However, much of the language of this statement is that of the "animal rights" movement. If animals have rights, the basic right is to that of life. Anyone who eats meat knows that animals do not have a right to life. Anyone who owns a pet or works in a zoo knows that animals do not have the right to liberty. Anyone who owns a pet knows that happiness of the owner takes precedence over that of the pet. Of course, the direction the animal rights movement goes is that of vegetarianism, and this Social Principle does not go that far. However, protecting their life and health goes a long way down this path. Protecting animals in research facilities is part of the animal rights agenda. The concern to reduce the suffering of animals, even when people slaughter them for human consumption, is a concern of the animal rights movement. Such concern for the interests of animals suggests that they are not property. It starts down the path of the position that they have legal rights, and thus become part of a moral community. What I would describe as the extreme case is to treat non-human animals as equal to human beings.

D. Space

The universe, known and unknown, is the creation of God and is due the respect we are called to give the earth.

E. Science and Technology

We recognize science as a legitimate interpretation of God's natural world. We affirm the validity of the claims of science in describing the natural world, although we preclude science from making authoritative claims about theological issues. We recognize technology as a legitimate use of God's natural world when such use enhances human life and enables all of God's children to develop their God-given creative

potential without violating our ethical convictions about the relationship of humanity to the natural world.

In acknowledging the important roles of science and technology, however, we also believe that theological understandings of human experience are crucial to a full understanding of the place of humanity in the universe. Science and theology are complementary rather than mutually incompatible. We therefore encourage dialogue between the scientific and theological communities and seek the kind of participation that will enable humanity to sustain life on earth and, by God's grace, increase the quality of our common lives together.

Science is an independent observer of the natural world. It describes ongoing creative activity as evolution. It describes the interaction of atoms and cells. It describes chemical reactions. In the process, it envisions the growth of the universe and its continuing expansion.

Simply because science describes a process whereby human beings can do something does not mean that human beings should do it. What ought human beings to do with the knowledge of the world they have gained through science? Such a moral question of any society needs to include the economic, political, intellectual, and religious communities. Such decisions require the involvement of all participants in modern society. The scientific community exists in the context of other communities and in the context of a culture. The churches need to have a place at that table. They will interact with other religious community and with the non-religious elements of a free society. However, the human condition common to all persons and cultures gives plenty of common of ground for the discussion of what is best for society.

Many scientific advances have unintended effects. Proper harmonization of human need with nature is an important way for human beings to increase their awareness and care for what is beyond them. Human beings do not stand aloof from nature, but rather are in intimate communion with it. Even surrounding oneself with

things constructed by people still recognizes the web of natural and human relationships that brought produce them. The recognition of this web of relationships leads us to care for all living things in their proper sphere.

Technology has the purpose of enhancing ordinary human life. If a particular piece of technology does not meet that end, one must question its use.

F. Food Safety

We support policies that protect the food supply and that ensure the public's right to know the content of the foods they are eating. We call for rigorous inspections and controls on the biological safety of all foodstuffs intended for human consumption. We urge independent testing for chemical residues in food, and the removal from the market of foods contaminated with potentially hazardous levels of pesticides, herbicides, or fungicides; drug residues from animal antibiotics, steroids, or hormones; contaminants due to pollution that are carried by air, soil, or water from incinerator plants or other industrial operations. We call for clear labeling of all processed or altered foods, with premarket safety testing required. We oppose weakening the standards for organic foods. We call for policies that encourage and support a gradual transition to sustainable and organic agriculture.

The Social Principle is that the protection of the food supply is a simple matter of self-preservation. This protection includes removing from the market foods contaminated with potentially hazardous levels of pesticides, herbicides, or fungicides. It also includes concern for drug residues from animal antibiotics, steroids, or hormones. It further includes concern for contaminants due to pollution carried by air, soil, or water from incinerator plants or other industrial operations.

The Social Principle is that the consumer has a right know the contents of what he or she buys.

The Social Principles call for the inspections and controls of the biological safety of food. The Social Principles have a concern for independent testing for chemical residues in food.

The Social Principles call for pre-market safety testing.

The Social Principles oppose weakening the standards for organic foods. The fact is, organic food could be less safe than non-organic food, by increasing the risk of exposure to biological contaminants and food-borne diseases. This fact may suggest that the transition the Social Principles desires toward organic farming is one that we should question.

The Social Principles call for a transition to “sustainable” and “organic” agriculture. “Sustainable’ implies the Earth Charter. It implies government decisions that determine what is “sustainable.” Organic farming is a form of agriculture that avoids or largely excludes the use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, plant growth regulators, and livestock feed additives. Organic farming excludes the use of certain synthetic inputs, such as synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides and genetically modified organisms (GMOs).As far as possible, organic farmers rely on crop rotation, crop residues, animal manures and mechanical cultivation to maintain soil productivity and tilling to supply plant nutrients, and to control weeds, insects and other pests. According to the International Organic Farming Organization, "The role of organic agriculture, whether in farming, processing, distribution, or consumption, is to sustain and enhance the health of ecosystems and organisms from the smallest in the soil to human beings."

The Nurturing Community and Insuring Domestic Tranquility

After my study of the social principles regarding the nurturing community, here are my social principles.

Human beings are social creatures, slowly maturing physically, intellectually, and spiritually through the various stages of childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. The family is the primary nurturing community in which this maturity takes place, although other forms of Christian community may also prove meaningful to some. Such nurturing communities encourage development of the fullest potential in individuals. All persons are important, for God has given them individual life in creation, loved them in Jesus Christ, and transforms them through the Holy Spirit. God does all of this with no reflection upon their personal merit. Therefore, Christians support social climates in which nurturing communities can thrive, fulfilling their divine purpose of valuing the worth and dignity of each individual.

Words are powerful, and thus, as Christians and as members of a free society, we ought to encourage all persons to use words that reflect the value of each person. We ought to reject derogatory uses of words, especially concerning race, nationality, ethnic background, gender, sexuality, and physical difference.

The family is the basic human community that nurtures and sustains persons in mutual love, responsibility, respect, and fidelity. Both father and mother are important for all children. Of course, “family” may be the nuclear family, the extended family, families with adopted children, single parents, stepfamilies, and couples without children. Men and women share the responsibility of being parents. The broader social community, the economic community, and the political community have an interest in maintaining and strengthening family relationships, with the intent that all persons in the family mature as persons.

Some Christians and other religious communities have found new patterns of Christian nurturing communities such as Koinonia Farms, certain monastic and other religious orders, and some types of corporate church life. Churches with open minds and hearts will seek ways of understanding the needs and concerns of such Christian groups, finding ways of ministering to them and through them.

As Christians and as members of a free society, marriage remains a covenant that a man and woman express in love, mutual support, personal commitment, and shared fidelity. From a Christian perspective, God's plan is for lifelong, faithful marriage. Churches must be on the forefront of premarital and postmarital counseling in order to create and preserve strong marriages. God's blessing rests upon such marriage, whether or not there are children of the union. We ought to set aside social norms that assume different standards for women than for men in marriage.

The laws of civil society ought to define marriage as the union of one man and one woman.

When a married couple is estranged beyond reconciliation, even after thoughtful consideration and counsel, divorce is a regrettable alternative in the midst of brokenness. Such a decision is devastating emotionally, spiritually, and economically. Divorce rates are too high. Partners in a divorce ought to use methods of mediation to minimize the

adversarial nature and faultfinding that are often part of our current judicial processes. Although divorce publicly declares that a marriage no longer exists, other covenantal relationships resulting from the marriage remain, such as the nurture and support of children and extended family ties. Couples ought to engage in respectful negotiations in deciding the custody of minor children. Churches and society ought to support the consideration of either or both parents for this responsibility in order that custody not be reduced to financial support, control, manipulation or retaliation. The welfare of each child is the most important consideration. Clearly, divorce ought not to preclude a new marriage. The churches and society ought to minister compassionately to those in the process of divorce, as well as members of divorced and remarried families, in a community of faith where all persons share God's grace.

The single life is a valuable and worthwhile contribution to human community when it involves a full dedication of oneself to God and to some form of ministry. At the same time, intimate, faithful, and sexual relationship with a member of the opposite gender allows us to discover dimensions of our humanity that we would not otherwise discover. Every constitution of the family is worthwhile, whether as single persons, married without children, single with children, and married with children. However, children best develop their identity in relationship to both the same sex parent and the opposite sex parent. These early relationships are important for the development of healthy adults. Male and female share in common their humanity, both having equal worth in the eyes of God. One gender is not superior to another. Each individual is an incomplete fragment, for human beings are social creatures. We achieve human wholeness through meaningful relationships with others. Men and women become whole as they learn to give honor and respect to each other.

In our free society, each individual has the freedom to love and to seek love with people of their choice.

Gender diversity is a gift from God, intended to add to the rich variety of human experience and perspective.

Sexuality is God's good gift to all persons. We affirm that gift when we publicly commitment ourselves to each other. All persons ought to discipline themselves in their stewardship of this gift. Even thought sexuality is intimate and personal, we have limited understanding of this complex gift. The medical, theological, and social science disciplines ought to combine in a determined effort to understand human sexuality more completely. Churches could even take a leadership role in bringing together these disciplines to address this most complex issue. Further, for the Christian, God challenges us to find responsible, committed, and loving forms of expression of our sexuality.

The Bible and church tradition clearly affirms sexual relations only in the marriage bond. Sex may become exploitative within as well as outside marriage. Churches and all citizens reject all sexual expressions that damage or destroy the humanity God has given us as birthright, and affirm only that sexual expression that enhances that same humanity. Sexual relations where one or both partners are exploitative, abusive, or promiscuous are beyond the parameters of acceptable Christian and acceptable ethical behavior and are ultimately destructive to individuals, families, and the social order.

Churches unite with many other citizens concerned with morality to deplore all forms of the commercialization and exploitation of sex, with their consequent cheapening and degradation of human personality. They call for strict global enforcement of laws

prohibiting the sexual exploitation or use of children by adults and encourage efforts to hold perpetrators legally and financially responsible. They call for the establishment of adequate protective services, guidance, and counseling opportunities for children thus abused. They insist that all persons, regardless of age, gender, marital status, or sexual orientation, are entitled to have their human and civil rights ensured.

Churches ought to recognize the continuing need for full, positive, age-appropriate and factual sex education opportunities for children, young people, and adults. The churches and other religious communities offer a unique opportunity to give quality guidance and education in this area.

Homosexual persons no less than heterosexual persons are individuals of sacred worth. All persons need the ministry and guidance of the church in their struggles for human fulfillment, as well as the spiritual and emotional care of a fellowship that enables reconciling relationships with God, with others, and with self. The United Methodist Church does not condone the practice of homosexuality and consider this practice incompatible with Christian teaching. Churches affirm that God's grace is available to all, and we will seek to live together in Christian community. Families and churches ought not to reject or condemn lesbian and gay members and friends. Churches ought to commit ourselves to be in ministry for and with all persons.

Family violence and abuse in all its forms—verbal, psychological, physical, sexual— is detrimental to the covenant of the human community. Churches ought to provide a safe environment, counsel, and support for the victim. While churches deplore the actions of the abuser, we affirm that person to be in need of God's redeeming love.

One abuse of the good gift of sexuality is sexual harassment. Sexual harassment as any unwanted sexual comment, advance or demand, either verbal or physical, that the recipient reasonably perceives as demeaning, intimidating, or coercive. Sexual harassment is exploitation of a power relationship as well as a sexual issue. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the creation of a hostile or abusive working environment resulting from discrimination based on gender. Sexual harassment creates improper, coercive, and abusive conditions wherever it occurs in society. Sexual harassment undermines the social goal of equal opportunity and the climate of mutual respect between men and women. Unwanted sexual attention is wrong and discriminatory. Sexual harassment interferes with the moral mission of the Church.

Concerning abortion, the beginning of life and the ending of life are the God-given boundaries of human existence. While individuals have always had some degree of control over when they would die, they now have the awesome power to determine when and even whether new individuals will be born. Unborn human life is sacred. The life and well-being of the mother is also sacred. Tragic conflicts of life with life may justify abortion. In such cases, the church ought to support the legal option of abortion under proper medical procedures. Abortion for the purpose of birth control or gender selection is unacceptable. Late-term abortion is also unacceptable. Christians and others concerned with the moral quality of their actions must prayerfully discern the proper conditions that warrant abortion. The churches need to minister to those who choose to terminate pregnancy. However, churches and society ought to place the option of adoption consistently before anyone considering abortion. The legality of abortion does not determine the moral issues involved in abortion.

Children are a gift from God to be welcomed and received. Churches recognize that some circumstances of birth make the rearing of a child difficult. They ought to affirm and support the birth parent(s) whose choice it is to allow the child to be adopted. All persons ought to recognize the agony, strength, and courage of the birth parent(s) who choose(s) in hope, love, and prayer to offer the child for adoption. In addition, all persons ought to recognize the anxiety, strength, and courage of those who choose in hope, love, and prayer to be able to care for a child. All persons ought to affirm and support the adoptive parent(s)' desire to rear an adopted child as they would a biological child. When circumstances warrant adoption, people ought to follow proper legal procedures. When appropriate and possible, people ought to encourage open adoption so that a child may know all information and people related to them, both medically and relationally. People ought to support and encourage greater awareness and education to promote adoption of a wide variety of children through foster care, international adoption, and domestic adoption. In particular, churches ought to commend the birth parent(s), the receiving parent(s), and the child to the care of the churches, that they may share grief, celebrate their joy, and nurture the child in a community of Christian love.

Concerning care for the dying, every mortal life will ultimately end in death. Death is never a sign that God has abandoned us, no matter what the circumstances of the death might be. As Christians, we must always be prepared to surrender the gift of mortal life and claim the gift of eternal life through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Care for dying persons is part of our stewardship of the divine gift of life when cure is no longer possible. We encourage the use of medical technologies to provide palliative care at the end of life when life-sustaining treatments no longer support the goals of life, and when they have reached their limits. There is no moral or religious obligation to use these when they impose undue burdens or only extend the process of dying. Dying persons and their families are free to discontinue treatments when they cease to be of benefit to the patient. Even when one accepts the inevitability of death, the church and society must continue to provide faithful care, including pain relief, companionship, support, and spiritual nurture for the dying person in the hard work of preparing for death. We encourage and support the concept of hospice care whenever possible at the end of life.

Concerning suicide, a human life ought not to end in this way. Suicide is often the result of depression, pain, and suffering. Such persons need access to proper pastoral and medical care. As Romans 8:38-39 reminds us, nothing separates us from the love of God. Condemnation of the person who successfully completes suicide or a stigma upon the family of such a person is hardly appropriate. The churches ought to oppose assisted suicide and euthanasia.

Bible passages

The primary nurturing community in the Bible is the family. The classic statement of the principle is in Genesis and its reflection in the teaching of Jesus.

Genesis 1:26-28 (NRSV)

[26] Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over

the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."
[27] So God created humankind in his image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.
[28] God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."

Genesis 2:20-25 (NRSV)

[20] The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. [21] So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. [22] And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. [23] Then the man said,
"This at last is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
this one shall be called Woman,
for out of Man this one was taken."
[24] Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh. [25] And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

The way Jesus uses this text is also suggestive in Mark 10: 2-12 .

Mark 10:6-9 (NRSV)

[6] But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' [7] 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, [8] and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one flesh. [9] Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

Several other passages relate to the family and marriage.

Exodus 20:12, Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.
Exodus 20:14, You shall not commit adultery.
Deuteronomy 27: 16 "Cursed be anyone who dishonors father or mother." All the people shall say, "Amen!"
Deuteronomy 27: 20 "Cursed be anyone who lies with his father's wife, because he has violated his father's rights." All the people shall say, "Amen!" 21 "Cursed be anyone who lies with any animal." All the people shall say, "Amen!" 22 "Cursed be anyone who lies with his sister, whether the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother." All the people shall say, "Amen!" 23 "Cursed be anyone who lies with his mother-in-law." All the people shall say, "Amen!"

Exodus 22: 16 When a man seduces a virgin who is not engaged to be married, and lies with her, he shall give the bride-price for her and make her his wife. 17 But if her father refuses to give her to him, he shall pay an amount equal to the bride-price for virgins.
Leviticus 18: 6 None of you shall approach anyone near of kin to uncover nakedness: I am the LORD. 7 You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father, which is the nakedness of your mother; she is your mother, you shall not uncover her nakedness. 8 You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife; it is the nakedness of your father. 9 You shall not uncover the nakedness of your sister, your father's daughter or your mother's daughter, whether born at home or born abroad. 10 You shall not uncover the nakedness of your son's daughter or of your daughter's daughter, for their nakedness is your own nakedness. 11 You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife's daughter, begotten by your father, since she is your sister. 12 You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's sister; she is your father's flesh. 13 You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister, for she is your mother's flesh. 14 You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's brother, that is, you shall not approach his wife; she is your aunt. 15 You shall not uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law: she is your son's wife; you shall not uncover her nakedness. 16 You shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife; it is your brother's nakedness. 17 You shall not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter, and you shall not take her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter to uncover her nakedness; they are yourflesh; it is depravity. 18 And you shall not take a woman as a rival to her sister, uncovering her nakedness while her sister is still alive.
19 You shall not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness while she is in her menstrual uncleanness. 20 You shall not have sexual relations with your kinsman's wife, and defile yourself with her.
Leviticus 19: 20 If a man has sexual relations with a woman who is a slave, designated for another man but not ransomed or given her freedom, an inquiry shall be held. They shall not be put to death, since she has not been freed; 21 but he shall bring a guilt offering for himself to the LORD, at the entrance of the tent of meeting, a ram as guilt offering. 22 And the priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of guilt offering before the LORD for his sin that he committed; and the sin he committed shall be forgiven him.
Leviticus 20: 10 If a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall be put to death. 11 The man who lies with his father's wife has uncovered his father's nakedness; both of them shall be put to death; their blood is upon them. 12 If a man lies with his daughter-in-law, both of them shall be put to death; they have committed perversion, their blood is upon them. 13 If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall be put to death; their blood is upon them. 14 If a man takes a wife and her mother also, it is depravity; they shall be burned to death, both he and they, that there may be no depravity among you. 15 If a man has sexual relations with an animal, he shall be put to death; and you shall kill the animal. 16 If a woman approaches any animal and has sexual relations with it, you shall kill the woman and the animal; they shall be put to death, their blood is

upon them. 17 If a man takes his sister, a daughter of his father or a daughter of his mother, and sees her nakedness, and she sees his nakedness, it is a disgrace, and they shall be cut off in the sight of their people; he has uncovered his sister's nakedness, he shall be subject to punishment. 18 If a man lies with a woman having her sickness and uncovers her nakedness, he has laid bare her flow and she has laid bare her flow of blood; both of them shall be cut off from their people. 19 You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister or of your father's sister, for that is to lay bare one's own flesh; they shall be subject to punishment. 20 If a man lies with his uncle's wife, he has uncovered his uncle's nakedness; they shall be subject to punishment; they shall die childless. 21 If a man takes his brother's wife, it is impurity; he has uncovered his brother's nakedness; they shall be childless.

I would like to share the basic "household rules" the New Testament contains as a beginning for our reflection.

Colossians 3:18-4:1 (NRSV)

[18] Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. [19] Husbands, love your wives and never treat them harshly.

[20] Children, obey your parents in everything, for this is your acceptable duty in the Lord. [21] Fathers, do not provoke your children, or they may lose heart. [22] Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything, not only while being watched and in order to please them, but wholeheartedly, fearing the Lord. [23] Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters, [24] since you know that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you serve the Lord Christ. [25] For the wrongdoer will be paid back for whatever wrong has been done, and there is no partiality. [1] Masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly, for you know that you also have a Master in heaven.

Ephesians 5:21-6:9 (NRSV)

[21] Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ.

[22] Wives, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord. [23] For the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church, the body of which he is the Savior. [24] Just as the church is subject to Christ, so also wives ought to be, in everything, to their husbands.

[25] Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, [26] in order to make her holy by cleansing her with the washing of water by the word, [27] so as to present the church to himself in splendor, without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind—yes, so that she may be holy and without blemish. [28] In the same way, husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. [29] For no one ever hates his own body, but he nourishes and tenderly cares for it, just as Christ does for the church, [30] because we are members of his body. [31] "For this reason a man will leave his father and

mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” [32] This is a great mystery, and I am applying it to Christ and the church. [33] Each of you, however, should love his wife as himself, and a wife should respect her husband.

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. [2] “Honor your father and mother”—this is the first commandment with a promise: [3] “so that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.”

[4] And, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

[5] Slaves, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as you obey Christ; [6] not only while being watched, and in order to please them, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. [7] Render service with enthusiasm, as to the Lord and not to men and women, [8] knowing that whatever good we do, we will receive the same again from the Lord, whether we are slaves or free.

[9] And, masters, do the same to them. Stop threatening them, for you know that both of you have the same Master in heaven, and with him there is no partiality.

I Timothy 3:2
Now a bishop must be above reproach, married only once, temperate, sensible, respectable, hospitable, an apt teacher,

I Timothy 3:12
Let deacons be married only once, and let them manage their children and their households well;

I Timothy 5:9
Let a widow be put on the list if she is not less than sixty years old and has been married only once;

1 Timothy 6:1-2 (NRSV)
Let all who are under the yoke of slavery regard their masters as worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and the teaching may not be blasphemed. [2] Those who have believing masters must not be disrespectful to them on the ground that they are members of the church; rather they must serve them all the more, since those who benefit by their service are believers and beloved.

Titus 2:4-5
so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, [5] to be self-controlled, chaste, good managers of the household, kind, being submissive to their husbands, so that the word of God may not be discredited.

1 Peter 2:18-3:7 (NRSV)

[18] Slaves, accept the authority of your masters with all deference, not
only those who are kind and gentle but also those who are harsh. [19] For it
is a credit to you if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering
unjustly. [20] If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what
credit is that? But if you endure when you do right and suffer for it, you
have God's approval. [21] For to this you have been called, because Christ
also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow
in his steps.
[22] "He committed no sin,
and no deceit was found in his mouth."
[23] When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did
not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. [24] He
himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we
might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. [25] For
you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the
shepherd and guardian of your souls.
Wives, in the same way, accept the authority of your husbands, so that,
even if some of them do not obey the word, they may be won over without
a word by their wives' conduct, [2] when they see the purity and reverence
of your lives. [3] Do not adorn yourselves outwardly by braiding your hair,
and by wearing gold ornaments or fine clothing; [4] rather, let your
adornment be the inner self with the lasting beauty of a gentle and quiet
spirit, which is very precious in God's sight. [5] It was in this way long ago
that the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves by
accepting the authority of their husbands. [6] Thus Sarah obeyed Abraham
and called him lord. You have become her daughters as long as you do
what is good and never let fears alarm you.
[7] Husbands, in the same way, show consideration for your wives in
your life together, paying honor to the woman as the weaker sex, since
they too are also heirs of the gracious gift of life—so that nothing may
hinder your prayers.

Hebrews 13:4
Let marriage be held in honor by all, and let the marriage bed be kept
undefiled; for God will judge fornicators and adulterers.

Philemon 8-21
[8] For this reason, though I am bold enough in Christ to command
you to do your duty, [9] yet I would rather appeal to you on the basis of
love—and I, Paul, do this as an old man, and now also as a prisoner of
Christ Jesus. [10] I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose
father I have become during my imprisonment. [11] Formerly he was useless
to you, but now he is indeed useful both to you and to me. [12] I am sending
him, that is, my own heart, back to you. [13] I wanted to keep him with me,
so that he might be of service to me in your place during my imprisonment

for the gospel; [14] but I preferred to do nothing without your consent, in order that your good deed might be voluntary and not something forced. [15] Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back forever, [16] no longer as a slave but more than a slave, a beloved brother—especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

[17] So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. [18] If he has wronged you in any way, or owes you anything, charge that to my account. [19] I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I will repay it. I say nothing about your owing me even your own self. [20] Yes, brother, let me have this benefit from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in Christ. [21] Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say.

Another passage gives further considerations on marriage and divorce.

I Corinthians 7:1-40

1 Now concerning the matters about which you wrote: "It is well for a man not to touch a woman." 2 But because of cases of sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. 3 The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. 4 For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. 5 Do not deprive one another except perhaps by agreement for a set time, to devote yourselves to prayer, and then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. 6 This I say by way of concession, not of command. 7 I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has a particular gift from God, one having one kind and another a different kind. 8 To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is well for them to remain unmarried as I am. 9 But if they are not practicing self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to be aflame with passion. 10 To the married I give this command-- not I but the Lord-- that the wife should not separate from her husband 11 (but if she does separate, let her remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband), and that the husband should not divorce his wife. 12 To the rest I say-- I and not the Lord-- that if any believer has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her. 13 And if any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him. 14 For the unbelieving husband is made holy through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy through her husband. Otherwise, your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. 15 But if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so; in such a case the brother or sister is not bound. It is to peace that God has called you. 16 Wife, for all you know, you might save your husband. Husband, for all you know, you might save your wife. 17 However that may be, let each of

you lead the life that the Lord has assigned, to which God called you. This is my rule in all the churches. 18 Was anyone at the time of his call already circumcised? Let him not seek to remove the marks of circumcision. Was anyone at the time of his call uncircumcised? Let him not seek circumcision. 19 Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing; but obeying the commandments of God is everything. 20 Let each of you remain in the condition in which you were called. 21 Were you a slave when called? Do not be concerned about it. Even if you can gain your freedom, make use of your present condition now more than ever. 22 For whoever was called in the Lord as a slave is a freed person belonging to the Lord, just as whoever was free when called is a slave of Christ. 23 You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of human masters. 24 In whatever condition you were called, brothers and sisters, there remain with God. 25 Now concerning virgins, I have no command of the Lord, but I give my opinion as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy. 26 I think that, in view of the impending crisis, it is well for you to remain as you are. 27 Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be free. Are you free from a wife? Do not seek a wife. 28 But if you marry, you do not sin, and if a virgin marries, she does not sin. Yet those who marry will experience distress in this life, and I would spare you that. 29 I mean, brothers and sisters, the appointed time has grown short; from now on, let even those who have wives be as though they had none, 30 and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no possessions, 31 and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away. 32 I want you to be free from anxieties. The unmarried man is anxious about the affairs of the Lord, how to please the Lord; 33 but the married man is anxious about the affairs of the world, how to please his wife, 34 and his interests are divided. And the unmarried woman and the virgin are anxious about the affairs of the Lord, so that they may be holy in body and spirit; but the married woman is anxious about the affairs of the world, how to please her husband. 35 I say this for your own benefit, not to put any restraint upon you, but to promote good order and unhindered devotion to the Lord. 36 If anyone thinks that he is not behaving properly toward his fiancee, if his passions are strong, and so it has to be, let him marry as he wishes; it is no sin. Let them marry. 37 But if someone stands firm in his resolve, being under no necessity but having his own desire under control, and has determined in his own mind to keep her as his fiancee, he will do well. 38 So then, he who marries his fiancee does well; and he who refrains from marriage will do better. 39 A wife is bound as long as her husband lives. But if the husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, only in the Lord. 40 But in my judgment she is more blessed if she remains as she is. And I think that I too have the Spirit of God.

I Corinthians 11:3-16 shows the mutual dependence of men and women on each other.

> But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the husband is the head of his wife, and God is the head of Christ. [4] Any man who prays or prophesies with something on his head disgraces his head, [5] but any woman who prays or prophesies with her head unveiled disgraces her head-- it is one and the same thing as having her head shaved. [6] For if a woman will not veil herself, then she should cut off her hair; but if it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or to be shaved, she should wear a veil. [7] For a man ought not to have his head veiled, since he is the image and reflection of God; but woman is the reflection of man. [8] Indeed, man was not made from woman, but woman from man. [9] Neither was man created for the sake of woman, but woman for the sake of man. [10] For this reason a woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. [11] Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man or man independent of woman. [12] For just as woman came from man, so man comes through woman; but all things come from God. [13] Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head unveiled? [14] Does not nature itself teach you that if a man wears long hair, it is degrading to him, [15] but if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For her hair is given to her for a covering. [16] But if anyone is disposed to be contentious-- we have no such custom.

Here are the key passages related to homosexuality.

Genesis 19:5-11 (NRSV)
[5] and they called to Lot, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us, so that we may know them." [6] Lot went out of the door to the men, shut the door after him, [7] and said, "I beg you, my brothers, do not act so wickedly. [8] Look, I have two daughters who have not known a man; let me bring them out to you, and do to them as you please; only do nothing to these men, for they have come under the shelter of my roof." [9] But they replied, "Stand back!" And they said, "This fellow came here as an alien, and he would play the judge! Now we will deal worse with you than with them." Then they pressed hard against the man Lot, and came near the door to break it down. [10] But the men inside reached out their hands and brought Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. [11] And they struck with blindness the men who were at the door of the house, both small and great, so that they were unable to find the door.

2 Peter 2:6-10 (NRSV)
[6] and if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction and made them an example of what is coming to the ungodly; [7] and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man greatly distressed by the licentiousness of the lawless [8] (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by their lawless deeds that he saw and heard), [9] then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trial, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment [10] —especially those who indulge their flesh in depraved lust, and who despise authority.

Bold and willful, they are not afraid to slander the glorious ones,

Jude 7 (NRSV)
7 Likewise, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which, in the same manner as they, indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural lust, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.

Leviticus 18:19-23 (NRSV)
19 You shall not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness while she is in her menstrual uncleanness. 20 You shall not have sexual relations with your kinsman's wife, and defile yourself with her. 21 You shall not give any of your offspring to sacrifice them to Molech, and so profane the name of your God: I am the LORD. 22 You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination. 23 You shall not have sexual relations with any animal and defile yourself with it, nor shall any woman give herself to an animal to have sexual relations with it: it is perversion.

Leviticus 20:10-16 (NRSV)
10 If a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall be put to death. 11 The man who lies with his father's wife has uncovered his father's nakedness; both of them shall be put to death; their blood is upon them. 12 If a man lies with his daughter-in-law, both of them shall be put to death; they have committed perversion, their blood is upon them. 13 If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall be put to death; their blood is upon them. 14 If a man takes a wife and her mother also, it is depravity; they shall be burned to death, both he and they, that there may be no depravity among you. 15 If a man has sexual relations with an animal, he shall be put to death; and you shall kill the animal. 16 If a woman approaches any animal and has sexual relations with it, you shall kill the woman and the animal; they shall be put to death, their blood is upon them.

Leviticus 24:17-21 (NRSV)
17 Anyone who kills a human being shall be put to death. 18 Anyone who kills an animal shall make restitution for it, life for life. 19 Anyone who maims another shall suffer the same injury in return: 20 fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; the injury inflicted is the injury to be suffered. 21 One who kills an animal shall make restitution for it; but one who kills a human being shall be put to death.

Leviticus Chapter 18 on sexual boundaries:
None of you shall approach anyone near of kin to uncover nakedness: I am the LORD.
7 You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father, which is the nakedness of your mother; she is your mother, you shall not uncover her nakedness.
8 You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife; it is the nakedness of your father.
9 You shall not uncover the nakedness of your sister, your father's daughter or your mother's daughter, whether born at home or born abroad.

[10] You shall not uncover the nakedness of your son's daughter or of your daughter's daughter, for their nakedness is your own nakedness.
[11] You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife's daughter, begotten by your father, since she is your sister.
[12] You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's sister; she is your father's flesh.
[13] You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister, for she is your mother's flesh.
[14] You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's brother, that is, you shall not approach his wife; she is your aunt.
[15] You shall not uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law: she is your son's wife; you shall not uncover her nakedness.
[16] You shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife; it is your brother's nakedness.
[17] You shall not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter, and you shall not take her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter to uncover her nakedness; they are your flesh; it is depravity.
[18] And you shall not take a woman as a rival to her sister, uncovering her nakedness while her sister is still alive.
[19] You shall not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness while she is in her menstrual uncleanness.
[20] You shall not have sexual relations with your kinsman's wife, and defile yourself with her.
[22] You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination.
[23] You shall not have sexual relations with any animal and defile yourself with it, nor shall any woman give herself to an animal to have sexual relations with it: it is perversion.
Chapter 19
[29] Do not profane your daughter by making her a prostitute, that the land not become prostituted and full of depravity.

Romans 1:26-27 (NRSV)
[26] For this reason God gave them up to degrading passions. Their women exchanged natural intercourse for unnatural, [27] and in the same way also the men, giving up natural intercourse with women, were consumed with passion for one another. Men committed shameless acts with men and received in their own persons the due penalty for their error.

Romans 1:29-31 (NRSV)
[29] They were filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, covetousness, malice. Full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, craftiness, they are gossips, [30] slanderers, God-haters, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, rebellious toward parents, [31] foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 (NRSV)
[9] Do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived! Fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, sodomites, [10] thieves, the

greedy, drunkards, revilers, robbers—none of these will inherit the kingdom of God. [11] And this is what some of you used to be. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

1 Timothy 1:9-10 (NRSV)
[9] This means understanding that the law is laid down not for the innocent but for the lawless and disobedient, for the godless and sinful, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their father or mother, for murderers, [10] fornicators, sodomites, slave traders, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to the sound teaching

Exodus 21:22-25 (NRSV)
[22] When people who are fighting injure a pregnant woman so that there is a miscarriage, and yet no further harm follows, the one responsible shall be fined what the woman's husband demands, paying as much as the judges determine. [23] If any harm follows, then you shall give life for life, [24] eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, [25] burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20
[19] Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? [20] For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.

Philippians 4:8 (NRSV) whatever is honorable … whatever is pure,

Agna (pure) refers to being without moral defect, and therefore pure, chaste, upright, innocent, often in the sense of being without intent to do wrong in a matter, and thus harmless and acceptable behavior.

Oiktirmou (compassion) refers to a motivating emotion of sympathy, compassion, mercy, and pity. It means to show mercy and concern, with the implication of sensitivity and compassion.

Agaph (love) refers to an attitude of appreciating resulting from a conscious evaluation and choice. It refers to love and devotion. It refers to concern and interest in the other. This love has its basis in a sincere appreciation and high regard for the other. In the plural form, it refers to the love feast shared by the early church.

Adulteries
Fornication
Impurity
Licentiousness
Male prostitutes (*malakoi)*
Murder
Sodomites *arsenokoitai*

Exodus 21:22-23

When people who are fighting injure a pregnant woman so that there is a miscarriage, and yet no further harm follows, the one responsible shall be fined what the woman's husband demands, paying as much as the judges determine. If any harm follows, then you shall give life for life,

1 Samuel 31:4
Then Saul said to his armor-bearer, "Draw your sword and thrust me through with it, so that these uncircumcised may not come and thrust me through, and make sport of me." But his armor-bearer was unwilling; for he was terrified. So Saul took his own sword and fell upon it.

Family in a Free Society – Finding an intimate friendship

In this essay, I hope to show the importance of a free society doing all it can to preserve the intact family of mother and father. In directing the reader to its value, I will also deal with some of the modern concerns of divorce and re-marriage as well as the concern for same gender sexual attraction and expression. I will conclude with matters related to abortion and adoption.

Modern society carried over the centrality of the family in the Medieval, Renaissance, and Reformation periods into its social structure. In fact, the social context of modern society allows the family to fulfill a fundamental purpose: to provide an intimate context for expressing our worth and dignity and receive the worth and dignity of others. The development of our individuality initially occurs within the family. Birth order, the temporal development of the self, and the development of personality, occur first in the context of family. In common with all societies, modern society depends upon the family for the production of new members of society. The family has the responsibility of raising those children to have the abilities, dispositions, and attitudes that they will need to participate in civil and economic society. The family is the place where we gain our primary emotional enrichment. Children raised in intact families enjoy warm relationships with both parents, less likely to divorce, less likely to become unwed

parents, more likely to be successful in school, more likely to be healthy, less likely to abuse substances, less likely to experience child abuse, and less likely to commit crimes.

The modern family faces many challenges. However, before one points to factors such as the rise of individualistic attitudes, the shift in economic status of women, the growth of programs for poor families that increases dependency, and the continuing presence of patriarchal attitudes, we need to face the reality of sin. Human sin arises out of anxiety for the things we consider important to our future. Finitude, identity, status, relationship, and wealth, can all become so important to our perception of human life that anxiety leads us to behavior destructive of family. We protect ourselves from anxiety by seeking control, pride, aggressiveness, or even by sickly co-dependent relationships. The struggle we have is to honor the intact family without denouncing all other forms of family.

I want to give a few examples of the pressure placed upon families in non-modern societies, as well as the contrasting role of the family in a modern society.

In non-modern societies, father taught son an occupation in which the son would remain throughout his life. When the parents were too old to work, the son took care of the parents. The parents provided a source of wisdom for the younger generation. They also helped keep everyone stable in their faith and jobs. The primary social welfare program was the extended family.

By contrast, in a modern society, the family is a unit of consumption. With the emergence of civil society, the family focused less upon production and became a smaller, closer, and more private unity within which affective relationships were intense. From an economic perspective, the family is a community of purchase and enjoyment of

commodities. Civil and economic society depends upon consumption by families. Civil society is far more effective at meeting productive needs than the extended family had been. This separation of the satisfaction of affective and material is something that deserves our affirmation. In terms of companionship, this recognizes the mutual need of husband and wife and the mutual satisfaction that we have come to anticipate. Since the family is not a unit of production, it experiences the freedom of providing intimate friendship. The creation of a new family involves leaving behind the former family. This fact allows for openness to new forms of family that pre-modern societies do not possess. Although young families may miss the wisdom of previous generations in raising their children, the freedom of civil society and the production of books and other media resources allows for the dissemination of increasing wisdom on relationships in the family. This allows for experimentation and openness to the future that previous societies could not provide.

One area of struggle in modern society is that, from the legal perspective, the family holds property in common. Marriage is a contract that we need to take seriously. Man and woman bear individual rights that they bring into a marriage. Yet, in the marriage, they transcend the legal contract and agree to enter a relationship in which neither relates to the other as a bearer of rights.

Yet, rights based approaches and politicization of the family unit is not helpful in a philosophical discussion of the role of the nuclear family within liberal democracy. When every relationship becomes a political relationship, we remove morality from the picture. Rather, the nuclear family is the primary place where individuals experience recognition of their worth and dignity, have their need for intimacy and friendship met,

and generally transcend the concept of rights and political life. In fact, any family that descends to a consideration of the individual rights of its members has already ceased fulfilling its role of providing an intimate context for experiencing and expressing worth and dignity and has entered the realm of civil society. Individuals surrender isolated individuality in marriage.

The internal life of the family is outside the realm of individual rights. We are not present in the family as individuals but as members of a family. The family is a good in itself and the proper object of our activity. Family roles determine the normative structure of the relations of family members, and not the concept of individual rights. My sister in need does not carry an obligation for me to help because she bears individual rights, but because she is my sister. If I treat a member of the family as a bearer of rights, I treat him or her as a member of civil society rather than as a family member. The businessperson may treat a customer that way, but it is not appropriate to treat a spouse, child, or sibling that way. Further, since no individual within the family has property, but only as families do they have property, we cannot speak of individuals as bearers of rights. Marriage creates a single person as far as civil society is concerned. We cannot even speak of partnership, for we must look for a deeper and more thorough union in which we overcome the separation between the parties. The parties of the marriage surrender to each other. Individual projects have standing only as a part of the larger life they share. Does this communal view of marriage and family go too far for many people today?

This specialization of the family allows it to meet the need for emotional recognition that we have. With free societies, the family becomes the nuclear family. The domestic sphere is that area of our lives that consists of affective personal relations within

which people can express their psychological particularity and provide each other with emotional recognition. The domestic sphere encourages the development of healthy attachments to the people and things in our lives.

When we have the capacity to enter into an intimate, faithful, and sexual relationship with a member of the opposite sex, we discover dimensions of our humanity that we would not otherwise discover. We can see positive signs of readiness for marriage in a general capacity for retaining friendship, an interest in work, and more interest in the partner than in self. Signs of lack of readiness include the desire to educate or criticize the other, hyper-sensitivity, one who has no friends and does not mix well in society, one pessimistic, or the still looking for the ideal marriage partner.

The main way in which the domestic life actualizes the individual is the free choice to marry a particular person. The family is the context within which people can develop and find recognition of the psychological dimension of their emotional needs and traits. It is the setting where personal feelings count. One can reasonably expect that others will understand and care. We can hope to have others love us as the particular person we are. One can expect unconditional love in the family. No other place in the modern social world allows people to realize and find acceptance of the emotional aspects of their particularity. We will find emotional investment possible in other spheres of life. However, the family is the primary place for that emotional life to find satisfaction.

The well-being of individuals and the manner in which human society finds itself linked together has its source in the human community called family and marriage. The family is an intimate community, a school of deeper humanity. It needs a generous

communion of minds and hearts and deliberation between spouses and deliberation between parents and children. Children need the kind of education that will help them engage society in a meaningful and responsible way and form families of their own. Various generations often come together in the family. They help each other grow in wisdom. They help harmonize personal rights with responsibilities to a community. Political and economic leaders have an interest in recognizing the dignity of the family, protecting it, and promoting it. The advancement of the well-being of domestic life enhances broader human society.

The first human community to which most persons relate is their biological family. They learn to relate to authority figures and too often to siblings and the extended family. They learn to relate to neighbors and playmates. In the process, they discover that they cannot do whatever they want. They learn to discipline their desires and discern courses of action and behavior in relationship with others. In fact, they discover their sense of self in relationship with others. Modern society gives valued individuals the impression that only the individual matters. In reality, individuals discover both unity and diversity in the context of human community.

Human love calls people to move beyond themselves and involve themselves in the lives, hopes, and dreams of others. The experience of such love is a feeling for others and their importance in one's life. This love is not morality itself, but rather prepares the way for moral discourse. Considerations of morality and ethics have their source in love. Love causes us to de-center self and find our fulfillment in caring for another. Individuals find their fulfillment in relationship with others. Our encounter with persons different from us calls us out of ourselves and into new discovery of the potential person we can

become. True love enables us to see. Love permits us to see the spiritual core of the other, the reality of the potential of the other. Becoming openly intimate with another becomes a window toward genuinely loving relationships with others. Genuinely loving another helps us become loving people, loving in a way that shares love with others as well. We grow in our love for humanity and in our love of life. Such love implies care, the active concern for the life and the growth of that which we love. Many people have a nagging suspicion that nothing matters; we cannot do anything to make changes. Therefore, we become apathetic, uninvolved, and grasp for external stimulants. Care suggests that something does matter. Care is the opposite of apathy. Care is what we need to heal such sickness. We tend toward another; we have inclination toward another and give attention to another. Such love implies responsibility, our response to the needs of another human being. Such love implies respect; the ability to see the unique individuality of the other, separating the others growth from any purpose in serving us. Such love implies knowledge of the other, transcending simple concern for us. Isolated individuals are little more than fragments, while a meaningful life experiences the profound connection each life has with another. Love is the royal road to genuine knowledge of another and us. It is the way to genuine union, answering our quest to escape the prison of our aloneness. In genuinely discovering another, we find ourselves. The act of love transcends thought and words.

The integration of sexuality into the life of the family and kinship group show that individual institutions are not simply geared each to a particular need but aid in the social integration of human behavior generally and thereby in the attainment of individual identity as well. Therefore, marriage itself has priority over the family and children. It

embraces the entire lives of those who enter it. Women and men are free and equal beings, capable of participating in public life together. They are also free and equal within the family unit. The roles of the sexes are opposite and yet complementary. Individuals seek in a person of the opposite sex a comprehensive complement to their own being and existence. Men and women can concentrate on a relationship with a particular person of the other sex. They can find in this relation to a person of the other sex an exemplary fulfillment of their destination to live in society.

Marriage, divorce, re-marriage, and gender issues in Christianity

In my view, the Bible initiates a dialogue concerning marriage, divorce, and remarriage that the tradition of the church has continued.

To my knowledge, monogamy is a marriage practice that the church slowly recognized as the only way in which the people of God ought to honor each other. I grant that in cultures that practice polygamy, the church allowed people who convert to Christianity to remain in their style of marriage out of compassion. However, the hint in Genesis that a man shall leave his parents and cling to his wife is suggestive.

When God made us "male and female," the relationship between the two reflects the image of God. Sexuality is one of the ways we participate in the creative activity of God. Yet, our sexual expression does not automatically make this happen. The account in Genesis 1 and 2 suggest that God created men and women equally in the image of God. The story implies equality, and not subordination.

The matter of human sexuality particularly falls under the injunction of Paul to honor God in the body and to consider our bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit. What we do with our bodies is important to God. Our bodies are the only bodies we will have in

this life. Scientifically, we know that this is the only time that this set of genes has ever existed or ever will exist. We have a unique gift to offer, and we can offer that gift only with this body. We will only be in these bodies a brief time. The same is true as we come face to face with others. They are unique gifts who will live a relatively brief time. We need to honor them as temples of the Holy Spirit.

The Bible freely discusses sexuality. God made humanity "male and female." On this basis, it recognizes marriage as existing only between male and female, as Jesus said in Mark 10:6-9. In saying this, Jesus placed his blessing upon the union of man and woman. In I Corinthians 7:3-6, Paul included the admonition that neither the man nor the woman ought to deny the sexual needs of the other in the context of marriage. Ephesians 5:21-33 deals with the relationship between husband and wife in the context of marriage. Other passages have a similar emphasis: I Timothy 3:2, 3:12, 5:9, Titus 2:4-5, I Peter 3:1, 3:5, 3:7, and Hebrews 13:4.

Paul writes of the responsibility of marriage partners. Modern interpreters tend to focus upon the submission of wives. However, he also speaks of the kind of love the man is to have for the wife. It is a sacrificial love, the kind of love that brings forth service. Paul gives advice to the husband, parents, and masters of the household that recognizes their social advantage while also showing sensitivity to the potential abuse of authority. Consistent with the teaching of Jesus, he warns Christians to stay away from oppressive use of authority, and the violence it typically legitimated. Instead, Christians in authority are to show compassion for those socially weak and marginal.

I grant the strangeness of a cultural mindset that could argue for faithfulness in marriage and assume multiple wives and concubines for those who could afford them.

However, we need to acknowledge that in societies that allow polygamy, monogamy is the pattern. The pattern of monogamy developed into the life-style of Christians over time. It appears to me that one of the reasons for monogamy is theological.

As I understand it, Hosea is the first prophet to use the image of husband and wife as an analogy of the relationship between God and Israel. In any case, he clearly believes that God has one wife, namely, Israel, and that Israel has one husband, namely, God. We find the same imagery in the New Testament, suggesting the church is the bride of Christ. This choice of exclusive marriage relationship in the relationship between God and the covenant people is a reflection of what God intends in our human marriage relationships. Further, such texts are important in considering the biblical ethical ideal concerning sexual expression. When Jesus goes back to creation, he considers the intention of God for humanity. The intention of God is that humanity find sexual expression in the life-long, loving relationship between a man and a woman. This ethical ideal reflects on personal development as a human being. Entering into relationship with someone significantly different from me challenges me to grow in my experience of humanity. We are human beings only as male and female. When we take the risk of entering into partnership with someone that different from us, we discover dimensions of ourselves that we would never have known had it not been for that relationship. We also discover dimensions of the other that we would not have known. In addition, faithfulness is an important virtue to develop. When we make a promise to another person in marriage, living up to that promise says much about character and values.

I would suggest that the church has not changed this positive evaluation of marriage. If anything, the church has elevated the status of marriage in its tradition. This

positive view of marriage is the background out of which we can understand the discussion within the Bible about divorce.

First, let us examine material in the Old Testament that relates to divorce.

Jeremiah, sometime during the reign of Josiah (640-609 BC), utters a prophecy in which he refers to God divorcing the northern ten tribes, Israel.

> Jeremiah 3:6-8
> The LORD said to me in the days of King Josiah: Have you seen what she did, that faithless one, Israel, how she went up on every high hill and under every green tree, and played the whore there? 7 And I thought, "After she has done all this she will return to me"; but she did not return, and her false sister Judah saw it. 8 She saw that for all the adulteries of that faithless one, Israel, I had sent her away with a decree of divorce; yet her false sister Judah did not fear, but she too went and played the whore.

One story of the Patriarchs involves Abraham sending away Hagar.

> Genesis 21:9-14
> But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, playing with her son Isaac. 10 So she said to Abraham, "Cast out this slave woman with her son; for the son of this slave woman shall not inherit along with my son Isaac." 11 The matter was very distressing to Abraham on account of his son. 12 But God said to Abraham, "Do not be distressed because of the boy and because of your slave woman; whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for it is through Isaac that offspring shall be named for you. 13 As for the son of the slave woman, I will make a nation of him also, because he is your offspring." 14 So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water, and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, along with the child, and sent her away. And she departed, and wandered about in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.

The only piece of divorce legislation is in Deuteronomy 24:1-4. Biblical scholars believe that the writers completed the Deuteronomic history, including Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings, during the time of exile, in 586-540 BC. However, we cannot date this particular legislation, for it could come from much earlier. The text reads like this:

> Deut 24:1-4
> Suppose a man enters into marriage with a woman, but she does not please him because he finds something objectionable about her, and so he writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house; she then leaves his house {2} and goes off to become another man's wife. {3} Then suppose the second man dislikes her, writes her a bill of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house (or the second man who married her dies); {4} her first husband, who sent her away, is not permitted to take her again to be his wife after she has been defiled; for that would be abhorrent to the LORD, and you shall not bring guilt on the land that the LORD your God is giving you as a possession.

The many laws concerning marriage show a careful safeguarding of this area of human life. The grounds for divorce here are finding something "objectionable," "disgraceful," or "scandalous," in the woman. Note, however, that the court system has nothing to do with the divorce. Ending the marriage is between the man and the woman. Over time, Jewish law limited divorce so that it was not just at the whim of the husband. In the Code of Hammurabi, #137-140, we find no such requirement upon the husband.

We find these words in the Holiness Code.

> Leviticus 21:7-8
> 7 They shall not marry a prostitute or a woman who has been defiled; neither shall they marry a woman divorced from her husband. For they are holy to their God, 8 and you shall treat them as holy, since they offer the food of your God; they shall be holy to you, for I the LORD, I who sanctify you, am holy.

Malachi 2:13-16 comes from the period between 500 and 460 BC. The text reads like this:

> (Mal 2:13-16) And this you do as well: You cover the Lord's altar with tears, with weeping and groaning because he no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor at your hand. {14} You ask, "Why does he not?" Because the LORD was a witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. {15} Did not one God make her? Both flesh and spirit are his. And what does the one God desire? Godly

> offspring. So look to yourselves, and do not let anyone be faithless to the wife of his youth. {16} For I hate divorce, says the LORD, the God of Israel, and covering one's garment with violence, says the LORD of hosts. So take heed to yourselves and do not be faithless.

People have used the saying “I hate divorce” toward me several times, indicating that I have done something that God hates. It has been an important awareness of grace that what God hates divorce, God loves the person who divorces – including me. I invite you, however, to look at the context. God does not hear their prayers or accept their offerings because they have been faithless to the companion of their youth. Though they express great emotion in worship, their moral wrong hindered access to God. The use of “companion” in reference to the wife is the only time this Hebrew word is used in this context. Hebrew used this word only for close friends with shared interests. He focused upon loyalty and faithfulness within the marriage covenant. He wants husbands to remain true to their first wife. However, the Hebrew text is not intelligible. Older men deserted their first wives to marry younger, more sexually attractive women. Men broke partnerships forged by years of shared struggle and joy. Some early Hebrew texts try to bring the passage in line with Deuteronomy, where God permits divorce. This text makes it clear that God hates divorce motivated by lust and the abandonment of women who have been faithful and loving partners over the years.

Ezra 10:10-16 is the final text from the Old Testament to which I direct your attention.

> (Ezra 10:10-16) Then Ezra the priest stood up and said to them, "You have trespassed and married foreign women, and so increased the guilt of Israel. {11} Now make confession to the LORD the God of your

> ancestors, and do his will; separate yourselves from the peoples of the land and from the foreign wives." {12} Then all the assembly answered with a loud voice, "It is so; we must do as you have said. {13} But the people are many, and it is a time of heavy rain; we cannot stand in the open. Nor is this a task for one day or for two, for many of us have transgressed in this matter. {14} Let our officials represent the whole assembly, and let all in our towns who have taken foreign wives come at appointed times, and with them the elders and judges of every town, until the fierce wrath of our God on this account is averted from us." {15} Only Jonathan son of Asahel and Jahzeiah son of Tikvah opposed this, and Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levites supported them. {16} Then the returned exiles did so. Ezra the priest selected men, heads of families, according to their families, each of them designated by name. On the first day of the tenth month they sat down to examine the matter.

Here is a situation where Ezra required divorce under the circumstances he describes. Ezra discovered a widespread practice of marriage with foreign wives. As a Persian official, his summons for people to come together carried a lot of weight. He wanted the removal of foreign wives. However, the fact that immediate action was not practical shows how widespread it was.

I would now like to share with you the Jewish position on divorce in the context of the first century AD. Divorce had long been legally permissible by Jewish law. In that tradition, only the man could divorce the woman. Mark interprets the motive of the Pharisees as a test, either for a fine point law, or to bring Jesus into conflict with Herod. Herod imprisoned and executed John the Baptist because he denounced the marriage practices of Herod Antipas and Herodias (6:17f). When these Pharisees, who had earlier joined forces with the "Herodians" (3:6), confront Jesus on this topic, the location is in Perea -- within the tetrarch's jurisdiction. Jesus' pronouncement is an obvious comment on the divorce and remarriage of these rulers. The only continuing debate about divorce in first-century Judaism existed between the followers of the more conservative

Shammai School and the more liberal Hillel school. Shammai taught that the "objectionable" behavior that could give a husband just cause for divorcing his wife was adulterous behavior or the wife's extreme failure to observe Jewish law. Hillel, however, allowed that any behavior that caused the husband annoyance or embarrassment was legitimate grounds for giving the wife a bill of divorcement. There also was a general rejection of divorce in Qumran. In Judaism, ordinary divorce was intended to make a remarriage possible. The Jewish command to the husband to pay the marriage bond at a divorce, meant at the same time practicable and effective protection for the woman.

As we move to the New Testament, the context in which both Jesus and Paul address themselves to marriage is the soon arrival of the end, so the possibility that of living a long period without the blessing a happy marriage, even a second one, did not realistically occur to them. Further, the early centuries of the church developed increasing asceticism, to the point where celibacy became valued more so than a happy marriage. It stands to reason, in such contexts, that remarriage after divorce would not find acceptance. Yet, pastoral concerns led to considering human brokenness as a regrettable reality in Christian marriages.

I suspect that the saying of Jesus in Luke 16:18 is the teaching of Jesus concerning divorce.

> Luke 16:18 (NRSV)
> [18] "Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and whoever marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery.

Under the supposition of many scholars that when there are multiple versions of a saying of Jesus in the gospels, the hardest saying is likely the saying of Jesus, we can assume

that this saying is closest to what Jesus taught concerning divorce. It contains an absolute prohibition of remarrying after divorce. Jesus likely applied the rule against priests marrying divorced women in the Holiness Code to the community he formed. The early church struggled with the pastoral application of this saying of Jesus to the new setting several decades after the death of Jesus. The early church, rather than adopt a rule oriented approach to a saying of Jesus, sought to apply the teaching of Jesus in the same spirit that Jesus understood the Torah and prophets. Out love for God and neighbor, it considered that adultery would be an occasion when the offended party could divorce remarry.

> Matthew 19:9 (NRSV)
> [9] And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for unchastity, and marries another commits adultery."

Paul finds a further reason to refuse a strict rule oriented approach to the saying of Jesus as he considered another pastoral situation and came down on the side of love:

> 1 Corinthians 7:15 (NRSV)
> [15] But if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so; in such a case the brother or sister is not bound. It is to peace that God has called you.

He suggests that if a non-Christian spouse divorces the Christian spouse, the Christian should be at peace with the decision and the implication is that remarriage is acceptable.

I invite you to consider the pastoral approach of the church to the human brokenness expressed in divorce.

Divorce and re-marriage is a rather clear example of the dialogue that within the biblical tradition and within the tradition of the church. The church tradition assumes from a theological perspective that human beings cannot dissolve marriage. Yet, the direction of the Bible and the tradition on this matter, the allowance for divorce and

remarriage became a pastoral necessity. In later tradition, the death of the person from one is divorced becomes another sufficient allowance for remarriage. The Orthodox Church has taken this path before the church of the west did in that it considered the possibility of two divorces as allowable. It also considered that after the second divorce, the church would not remarry, for the person ought to consider the possibility that marriage is simply not for him or her. The ecumenical councils of the church deal with second marriages in a variety of ways, all stressing the seriousness of divorce. They give guidance on what happens if a man marries a divorced woman, and then wants to become clergy. They give guidance on the procedure for penance if someone divorces. Just as the New Testament considered proper grounds for divorce, the tradition continues that discussion, as well as grounds sufficient for a second marriage. In the context of sexuality, ecumenical councils defended marriage against attacks from the growing celibate community. The growing Christianizing of European culture led to less tolerance of divorce and even more so of remarriage. If one assumes that both partners of the marriage are Christian, they receive the blessing of the church, and the culture supports Christian teaching and values, one ought not to be surprised that divorce and remarriage have less tolerance. However, the church continued its struggle to identify proper grounds. This means that the church is not against divorce. Rather, from a pragmatic perspective, it seeks to give spiritual and moral guidance as to the proper occasion for it.

The Bible has a grand vision for marriage. It expects faithfulness to the marriage covenant in every way, especially regarding sexual activity. Further, modern society, while presenting many challenges to the family, also expects high degrees of friendship and intimacy to occur in marriage.

Here is my question. What happens when marriage falls short of that ideal? What happens when marriage, far from fulfilling God's purpose for the partners, becomes a degrading and abusive relationship? What happens when marriage, instead of helping the partners move toward their highest good, brings out their darkness and sin? What happens when the marriage, instead of helping the partners to become more like Christ, fails to do so? Is there room for Christian couples to admit that they have failed to fulfill the purpose of God for the marriage? Who has the authority to make such a decision?

What ought the couple to do? In asking such a question, we move into the realm of moral reflection. Morality is a universal concern for humanity, and as such involves an understanding or philosophy of culture and society. Ethics reflects on ultimate goals and purposes for humanity. From a theological perspective, such a concern is not isolated as a phenomenon. Rather, it is part of our understanding of reality. Ethical concerns are part of the structure of a meaningful human life. Human beings are fully open to their social world. They orient their drives toward something. Humanity does not find satisfaction in this world. Human questioning always goes beyond what culture provides. Culture does not provide a limit to human questioning. Human questioning always moves beyond present communal circumstances. The modern or post-modern culture is not the final form human community will take.

God is the one who affirms the world, relating to the world as creator and as the hope for its future. God is the one who comes to establish the rule of God in this world. The idea of the good is essentially related to humanity and the human world because the good is concerned with the future of this human being the world of humanity. God becomes the ultimate good of the ethical quest. The rule of God and the full revelation of

the existence of God await the future, thereby connecting to the future of the good as that which humanity does not possess but which is also the object of striving. God is the embodiment of the good. This good has priority over all human striving for the good. In this sense, the rule of God defines the ultimate horizon for all ethical statements.

Specifically ethical reflection has the awareness that what is, is not what ought to be. It also recognizes that ethical decisions occur in an ambiguous world, meaning that no ethical principle is absolute, but rather exist in tension with other principles and with the particular situation. Christianity encourages human beings and societies to look beyond present achievements and orient oneself toward the fulfillment of the good life in God. Christianity recognizes that a *human* world will never fulfill the aspirations of humanity. Such meaning and fulfillment to human endeavor we find in God. Christianity relativizes all human endeavors in light of the future God has prepared for humanity. The direction such reflection and action takes, and the contribution Christianity can make, is a process we need to consider.

My understanding of a life within a secular and modern society is that citizens of such a society receive many positive benefits. The core of that benefit is freedom. This value of a modern society embeds itself in institutional life through a measure of political and economic freedom, intellectual freedom that expresses itself in the freedom to print, speak, and persuade others, religious freedom, freedom to associate with others of like mind, and so on. Moral and ethical freedom has slowly evolved as an important addition. Further, science and technology has become an important pursuit for physical well-being, the basic comforts for ordinary people, for the defense of the country, and generally for the use of nature to advance human happiness. Modern society is the first society to raise

individuality to an important social institution. Government exists to protect rights that government did not create. Rather, individuals already have the right to life, liberty, property, and the pursuit of happiness, as they understand it.

Now, I would like to consider the family in modern and post-modern culture.

One form of alienation in modern American society is the struggles of family life. Subjective alienation is the breakdown of the extended family and the resulting stress upon the nuclear family to provide the feeling of unconditional worth, dignity, and love that every human being deserves to experience. Before liberal democracy arose, the primary social welfare program was the extended family. Father taught son an occupation in which the son would remain throughout his life. When the parents were too old to work, the son took care of the parents. The parents provided a source of wisdom for the younger generation. They also helped keep everyone stable in their faith and jobs. Because of its emphasis upon liberty, the extended family and its control over individual life ended and individuals could create new traditions by creating new families. People in liberal democracies generally do not discover their unique place in life through discovering roots so much as to leave their roots and create new roots in new soil. Citizens of liberal democracies discover themselves by leaving home, not by returning to it. Many citizens do not adjust to this challenge, and thus experience subjective alienation.

Among the many puzzles concerning life in modern civilization is how it can sustain the nuclear family. I want to provide a little background for this difficulty. The modern social world brought the breakdown of the extended family. The primary social welfare program of pre-modern society was the extended family. Father taught son an

occupation in which the son would remain throughout his life. When the parents were too old to work, the son took care of the parents. The parents provided a source of wisdom for the younger generation. They also helped keep everyone stable in their faith and jobs. Because of the emphasis upon liberty and individuality, modern society brings the extended family and its control over individual life ended. Individuals could create new traditions by creating new families.

Respect for the dignity, worth, and value of the individual is one of the primary emphases of modern culture. Every individual longs for recognition from others for what we do. At the same time, we long for recognition for who we are.

The nuclear family consists of husband, wife, and children. The ethical purpose of the nuclear family in modern society is that it provides the feeling of unconditional worth, dignity, and love that every human being deserves to experience. Modern civilization is incredibly complex, given the interlocking connections of freely acting individuals, free association with others in civil society, freedom of economic arrangements, and the often cooperating and competitive interests that result in political tension. We should not minimize how difficult modern civilization is for individuals. Most people in modern life generally do not discover their unique place in life through discovering roots so much as to leave their roots and create new roots in new soil. Most citizens of modern societies discover themselves by leaving home, not by returning to it. Such stresses make it clear how difficult it is to be a modern person.

The natural place for the recognition of our unconditional worth and dignity is within the home. We nurture our children in the home, recognizing they would not survive without our love and support. We nurture each other through the various stages of

life. Members of a family can experience mutual love, responsibility, respect, and fidelity. Husband and wife generally share responsibilities for parenting and for the social, economic, and religious focus of the family. The purpose of such combined efforts is to bring every member of the family toward the best life they can lead.

The reward of intimate friendship and love in the context of marriage is one that most human beings consider an important element of their vision for their best human life. We desire the feeling of another person recognizing our worth, dignity, and value. The other genuinely loves us. We genuinely love the other. We do not give up on ourselves in the process. In fact, the individuality of each partner finds fulfillment in the intimacy of this friendship. We freely enter into these relationships. We open ourselves to the risks that such relationships bring with them. The intimacy of love also brings the intimacy of pain. We know each other well enough to enhance the other, and to hurt the other. Sadly, the fears associated with pain and the loss of our individuality often lead us to refuse to give the intimacy of marriage a chance. We can engage in struggles for power. We may have inhuman expectations of our partner and of marriage. We need to share willingly our experiences of childhood and adolescence, our fears, the places we feel defensive, our values, beliefs, and expectations, and our sense of responsibility for our lives. We can have the best that marriage offers as we accept responsibility for our marriages, as well as accept responsibility for our part in making the marriage the best it can be. Since marriage partners have shared responsibility for the marriage, they cannot do for the other only what the other can do. The other needs to give willingly the best one has to the marriage. The marriage needs the free contribution of each partner in order for the marriage to bring individuals to their best. In the most intimate relationships, the less

such environments call for command and obey. Rather, they call upon a partnership of values that leads to respect for each person.

God takes the act of divorce seriously. Anyone who has been through a divorce knows that there is plenty of sin to go around. We also know it represents a human failure and falls short of God's intent in marriage. The value of commitment and fidelity, the value of raising children, and the value of entering into relationship genuinely other in terms of sexuality, helps us to experience the good that God intends. Marriage and family are the primary ethical and moral training ground for us as human beings.

Jesus and Paul both developed their ethics and morality out of the vision of the soon arrival of the kingdom of God. I suggest that the context within which Jesus and Paul gave their counsel concerning divorce and remarriage no longer exists. I also suggest that the context of the tradition of the church, namely, asceticism, a sacramental view of marriage, and a Christian culture, no longer exist. Further, we dare not interpret as church law that which Jesus gave as ethical ideal.

In the matter of marriage, we can all agree that the ethical ideal of Jesus to a life-long marriage is clear. We can agree that Paul's vision of a life-long marriage relationship of mutual support and love between a man and a woman is in line with God's ideal as expressed in Genesis. However, we can also observe the reality that human beings fall short of that ethical demand. Ought this observation to surprise us? We are, after all, sinners. We must remind ourselves that, no matter how moral and righteous any of us might be we are not perfect. All of us fall short of our own ideals, let alone those

that God has for us. Those who have had happy marriages may pride themselves on doing so, and wonder why not everyone can be as good as they are. However, I would also suggest that they are nowhere near as good as they think they are. Further, I would also suggest that people who experience the pain of divorce are not as bad as others may think. I say all of this to suggest that we all depend upon grace for our happiness in life. We live by grace, and we are in constant need of forgiveness. As for me, I am on the side of the church being a means of grace to all sinners – like me and like the reader of this text. Divorce is a public matter. However, the good person often has secret sins they allow to themselves. We often excuse those private sins of thought or desire, excusing our own sin, while judging the sins of others. We separate ourselves from another person whom we believe not to be as good as that we are.

I have suggested an ethical and pastoral interpretation, rather than a legal interpretation, of the prohibition on divorce and remarriage. We all need grace. We have become new persons in Christ. As God continually makes us new persons, and shapes us into the image of Christ, the church needs to accept that new creation. God takes the covenant of marriage between two persons seriously. God treats divorce seriously. God treats it as the ethical, moral, and spiritual issue that it is, rather than as an item of law. Therefore, the Bible does not mean that divorce and remarriage are unforgivable. Whatever sin we experience in divorce, God is fully capable of forgiving that sin. Further, as God forgives, God forgets. The same needs to become true of the church. We have the obvious biblical emphasis upon our need for grace and forgiveness because of sin. Therefore, a view consistent with the dialogue the Bible began would be that divorce is permissible, even if it is not a righteous choice. In an imperfect world, people

sometimes make choices that are the lesser of evils. Further, I suggest that remarriage is not an adulterous condition. Sexual relations within the second marriage are holy.

Our society has seen the explosion of divorce. The fact that two people unite in marriage based upon some level of affection and commitment makes us aware of the slender threads that keep two people together. The public act of uniting in marriage in the presence of minister and congregation can strengthen those bonds. The Christian ideal or norm is the faithful and loving relationship between a man and a woman. When two people can maintain this relationship, and mentor others in it by their example, they become powerful witnesses to what God intends for marriage.

However, human will and human feeling often fail. In such circumstances, the church encourages couples to seek psychological, marital, and spiritual counsel. Even when two people are Christians, they may find that what they thought they had at the beginning of their marriage was not truly there or could not survive. The church does everything it can to provide a loving and supportive community for couples who face such options. God may hate divorce. God continues to love divorced people. The church encourages couples to minimize the negative influence of divorce upon their children. The New Testament struggles with the proper conditions for ending a marriage in a way that frees the individuals to re-marry. The New Testament does not speak with one voice. Luke 16:18 declares that any remarriage after any divorce is adultery. Matthew 19:9 offers the exception that if one of the partners has committed adultery, remarriage is allowable. I Corinthians 7:15 says that if a non-Christian spouse departs from the marriage, the Christian has the right to re-marry. The tradition of the church continues this discussion by considering other proper conditions for divorce, such as physical

violence against the wife. The church recognizes that people may exploit each other in marriage.

The church continues the discussion of the New Testament and the tradition in a modern context. Average life expectancy of individuals has increased from 45 to 75. Increased opportunities for women to support themselves economically have given them greater freedom to make choices of whether to remain with a partner. None of these realities justifies an easy divorce for Christians. Children suffer in most divorces. Yet, they may also suffer in the marriage. The couple needs to consider prayerfully the impact of divorce upon their children. Christians often fall short of what God intends in marriage. Instead of fulfilling the purpose of God for them, the marriage becomes degrading and abusive. Instead of encouraging the couple toward their highest and best life, it brings out their darkness and sin. The marriage fails in helping the partners become more like Christ. This abuse of the marriage relationship dishonors the intent God has for marriage and disrupts the social order. The church recognizes that Christian couples may in fact fail to fulfill the purpose of God for them, for their children, and for their marriage. The external and legal act of divorce is recognition of a divorce that has already happened in their hearts. They have already broken the covenant of marriage that involves loving, honoring, and cherishing each other. Breaking this covenant is serious. Couples need to give prayerful attention to restoring their covenant and finding new life with each other. However, if a couple makes the decision to divorce, the church does not pass judgment, for only the couple and God know the actual workings of their relationship. The church continues to offer a loving and forgiving community, even while it continues to uphold the ideal of faithful and loving married relationships.

Marriage and divorce also raises the question of the general relationship between men and women. In modern society, men and women can join on equal terms to contribute to a common culture. Free men and free women must join in the shaping of a social world on an equal footing and in many arenas of life: art, science, business, politics, and so on. Modern society desires for women what it desires for everyone, with a fair field and no favors. I hope we have grateful attitudes toward the constructive alternatives open to women. This humanitarian vision is a vision in which the church can share.

Gender differences do not require hierarchy. Men and women can learn to live lovingly and with humility, so that they can together fulfill their common destiny. We need to be faithful to our nature as men and women, for each has a special gift to offer humanity as a whole. However, human nature is such that to seek definition of the gift of each gender is fruitless. As soon as we make a statement about that gift, we will likely alienate one-third of the gender that will make some objection. As human beings, we do not want anyone to define us by neat boxes and or well-defined sketches. We cannot easily express differences between masculine and feminine. We even have psychology contributing to the problem, as some persons want women to "get in touch with their masculine side," and men to "get in touch with their feminine side." We cannot realistically make such neat definitions between masculine and feminine. Further, if a man can embody within himself humanity by getting in touch with his feminine side and the woman do so in reverse, then neither needs the other to experience their full humanity. We can experience the fullness of our humanity without this male and female relationship because as human beings, more unites than divides us. Men and women

relate to each other in such a way that humanity fulfills its destiny through the fellowship of the genders.

Individual Character and Homosexuality

Mainline churches have carried on a conversation concerning sexual orientation at least since the 1970's. The conversation has often not been a healthy one. We pigeon hold each other so quickly. What I would like to grant to both sides of the matter of whether homosexual practice is consistent with Christian teaching is that both sides have concern for and love for those who engage in the practice.

The church should be a place where are all persons are welcome. Yet, among the sins the churches need to confess is their complicity in degrading people of homosexual preference and practice. The churches have cooperated with modern society in personal insults and civil legislation that of demeaned persons of same gender orientation and practice. The churches have often excluded persons who struggle with sexual orientation and practice from the spiritual guidance of the churches. As such, these persons have often not received guidance in the best human life they can lead, as advised by the church. The churches have distanced themselves from the emotional struggles of those who have difficulty with gender identity and sexual orientation. Christian families have often rejected and condemned family members who have admitted to same gender sexual orientation. The churches have often rejected and condemned such persons, excluding them from the sacraments and the fellowship of the church. Any discussion of the position of the churches toward homosexual practice needs to begin with a confession of the sins in which the church has participated. The churches need to repent of their sins in this area.

The churches need to reaffirm that the homosexual is one whom God loves. The church needs to reflect the love God has for the world. All too often, the churches give the impression that they view themselves as holier than others are. If any community of persons ought to recognize the profound depths of sin in us all, it is the people of the church. Whether one views same sex relationships as acceptable Christian behavior or not, we ought to agree on the need for the church to open its doors and its heart. To my knowledge, the Bible does not call upon Christians to love their neighbors only if they qualify. The call is to love, and therefore to regard our neighbors as persons of worth and dignity, as persons of sacred worth, as children of God.

Christians generally unite on matters of personal morality. Our disagreements over matters like length of hair, whether women should wear genes, smoking, drinking, television in the home, eating in places that serve alcohol, going to movies, and so on, caused vigorous debate in some circles. However, none of these matters could go back to specific prohibitions in the Bible. Everyone tacitly recognized the attempt to interpret biblical principles and values. Most persons who have studied the matter biblically and historically recognize that here is an area of personal morality in which the Bible and theology are reasonably clear, and the churches disagree. Consequently, the present situation of the church introduces yet another wedge issue for Christians. Instead of dividing over matters related to baptism, the Lord's Supper, Christology, and church government, the churches could potentially divide over the matter of whether one can express his or her same-sex sexual orientation in the context of the fullness of Christian life and character. The person who says no believes that the homosexual act, by its

nature, is an unjust and unloving act; everything we know about Christian values and behavior prohibits it.

For example, the United Methodist Church has a clear stance that while persons of homosexual orientation are of sacred worth, homosexual practice is incompatible with Christian teaching. The denomination prohibits clergy from officiating at services of marriage for same-sex couples and prohibits the appointment of clergy who are practicing same-sex orientation. Those who seek a revision of this denomination's position believe that the prohibitions against homosexual practice in Scripture and Christian tradition should be placed in the context of Israel's rejection of sexual practices in the pagan temples of the ancient Near East and the Christian church's rejection of permissiveness and pederasty in the Graeco-Roman world. They believe that a covenant of fidelity by a same-sex couple is a different practice than the homosexual practices prohibited in Scripture and tradition. They view the present position of the Church to be cruel, unjust and exclusionary. They do not want the church fifty years from now to look back and wonder about how we could have been Christians today, just as we might wonder how Christians in the past could have supported slavery and racism. Those who support the Church's position believe that one should place the prohibitions against homosexual practice in Scripture and tradition in the context of the whole teaching of Scripture that affirms that the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman and celibacy in singleness are the best wisdom of the ages for the sexual life of human beings. They believe that the Church should continue to practice this ancient wisdom rather than accommodate to ideas and practices acceptable in Western societies. They point out that in matters sexual, society often pushes the limits of what a healthy community can take,

and must then return to traditional boundaries. They do not want the church in fifty years to look back and see the wreckage of human life that the church did not do its part to stop. The person who does not accept homosexual practice as Christian behavior does not have to be oppressive. Such a person may desire nothing more than a sincere application of what the Bible teaches concerning human sexuality. They support justice for homosexuals in civil society and hospitality toward all homosexual persons. However, they also believe that the public teaching and moral guidance of the Church about human sexuality should be faithful to the witness of Scripture and consistent with the teaching of the transcultural historic and global Christian community. They further have concern for the unity of the global church, where many cultures practice family values that do not include homosexuality as an ideal. These different assessments of homosexuality amount to rather fundamental disagreements about the interpretation of Scripture, the relationship of church and culture, and the meaning of human sexuality in light of divine revelation.

Another important dimension of this struggle in the church is that it calls into question an explicit statement of New Testament ethic or value. That being the case, the veracity of the biblical text becomes an issue. The “no” that the New Testament gives to this expression of our sexuality suggests that the New Testament considers it impossible to engage in the behavior with the blessing of God or the church. If the church can set aside a value like this, it suggests the New Testament is not accurate in addressing matters related to human hopes and dreams. While many of us can live with the antiquated science, politics, and economics of the Bible, and while many can live with historical error, when it comes to matters of explicit statement of values like this, we draw back.

The church cannot allow science to decide moral matters for it. However, in the matter of sexual orientation, it appears that a genetic component exists. If so, it appears that anything less than full acceptance consigns these persons to celibacy. In a society that places such a high value on sexual pleasure, such a recommendation from anyone appears as consignment to hell. The churches at least need to consider the impact of such a recommendation upon anyone. “Luck,” in the form of a random sequence of genes, has much to do with many issues people face. Genetic structure may make one prone to violence, lust, anger, and anxiety. In each of these cases, children are unlucky at birth. Human beings care for them, nurture them, and help them deal with the issue with which their genetic structure handed them. We do not take genetic structure as having the final word. The same is true for homosexual orientation. We do not need to take genetic structure as the final word in terms of the types of friendships such persons may have, and still be within behavior compatible with Christian teaching.

Well, let us take the plunge into this puzzle of the modern church. The modern church does not have the luxury of agreeing to disagree on important matters of faith and practice. The church polity of the various churches must have the courage to resolve important matters in a faithful way. In all cases, this faithfulness suggests accountability to the apostolic church, to the traditions of the church, and to the various churches of today. The churches can resolve these matters based on theological integrity. The legal or technical approach is not helpful in bringing the churches to peace on this matter. I invite you to explore the matter with something of an open mind and heart. If you disagree, please know that I do not write you out of the church or out of fellowship in eternity. My claim is that the biblical text and the Christian tradition concur that the practice of

homosexuality is not the ideal expression of Christian spirituality and ethical norms in the matter of human sexuality. The concern in the Bible and Christian tradition is for the attainment of the best human life as individuals and the best form of family life.

I think most of the churches agree that local churches need to extend pastoral care to all persons, regardless of sexual orientation or behavior. In sexual relationships, faithfulness to marriage vows is the standard or ideal toward which all Christians aim. Sexual behavior is an integral part of Christian discipleship and community. Sexual behavior is not simply a private matter. Sexual orientation by itself is not a barrier to Christian confession, baptism, membership, or ordination. The key question before the modern church is the appropriateness of same gender, exclusive, covenantal relationships. The proper context of such discussions is one of self-examination, confession, and repentance of our failure to fulfill the biblical ideal of the fulfillment of sexual desire.

The difficulties in such matters are large. We need to balance communal discernment with private conscience, discern the essential from the non-essential, and maintain fidelity to denominational tradition while being open to other denominational families. However, part of the teaching of the churches is to deal with such difficult and complex matters in the context of theological integrity. Technical, legal, or political approaches will not suffice. In the matter of homosexuality, many mainline Protestant churches have had legalistic battles that have undermined the teaching authority of the general church bodies that, structurally, provide the basis for the covenant between member churches, jurisdictional bodies, and the denomination. The result has been an undermining of trust. In other words, clergy and their leaders need to re-affirm the

covenant they have made in their ordination to teach faithfully what the denomination has determined to possess theological integrity. They need to do so, recognizing that sin and inadequate biblical and theological interpretation is open to further discernment.

I want to acknowledge at the beginning that many of us have a "gut check" on this matter. We may have loved one whom we want to accept and love. We have the person in our mind, and cannot imagine saying that something the person is doing is "incompatible with Christian teaching." On the other hand, my gut check is when I examine the agenda of those within my denomination who want to change the United Methodist Book of Discipline. One such ministry is on the web http://www.umaffirm.org/. Another is www.rcp.org. Affirmation is an activist caucus of LGBT people, and our allies. Reconciling Ministries Network is a national grassroots organization that exists to enable full participation of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities in the life of the United Methodist Church, both in policy and practice. When I read the full agenda, I confess that something in my gut tells me that this direction will not be helpful as the modern church seeks its ministry in a modern world.

Modern churches must reflect upon moral matters in the context of the churches of history, with special attention to the apostolic texts. It is to this tradition I now turn.

Biblical texts that address homosexual practice

I need to take a moment and refer to the texts that refer to homosexual practice. What I have to share here is an attempt to move us toward understanding the biblical text.

To begin, I emphasize that the Bible has an extensive dialogue within it about the way we express sexual desire. The Bible and the tradition of the church are quite clear that one can express the love one has for another human being in ways that express the perversion of our human nature rather than express our individual worth and dignity as

well as the dignity of another. Any reading of Old Testament convinces us that impurity can suddenly come upon any of us, but especially women, and especially in matters related to sexuality. Many of these laws reveal gender bias from our perspective. Such concern for right ordering has a broader basis than the priestly class, given the concern for sexual expression in the J and E document. However, rejection of the prostitution accepted in the worship of Canaanite deities and rejection of prostitution in general suggest the wide spread acceptance of these practices. Israel wanted to mark itself off from such practices. It wanted to be a distinctive people.

Genesis 18:16-19:38 does give our language the term "sodomy." It is an offensive term for anal sex, and even a term applied to sex with animals. It comes from a Latin word that simply means, "The sin of Sodom." The references to this event in the New Testament in II Peter 2:6-10 and Jude 7 are also instructive. A form of sexual depravity is a concern in these texts. E. A. Speiser in the Anchor Bible refers to this possibility. I also have no problem with the suggestion of von Rad that it refers to breaking hospitality customs at Sodom. The condemnation of homosexual gang rape is quite clear, of course. In any case, the fact that human beings can enter into disordered sexual relationships is an important one to remember as we consider what the Bible says about sexuality. As we consider these matters in the Old Testament, I would like remain focused upon sexual boundaries. Consequently, I disagree with those who draw parallels concerning slavery and keeping the Sabbath as relevant to the matter of proper sexual relationships. The fact that God has someone killed for breaking the Sabbath in Numbers 15:35 is not relevant to the matter before us.

The Holiness Code of Leviticus 17-26 is an ancient text from Israel. I agree that we need to be careful with any ancient text in terms of interpretation and application. It requires discernment. I would not want to apply this legislation to the life of the church in a direct way. However, I think it would be helpful if we examine briefly the content of this code. If we are to discern properly, we need to be aware of the context.

The code begins with offering with sacrifices. It makes it clear that since the life is in the blood, one ought not eat the blood. It has concern for sexuality in the context of the family, with members of one's immediate family and with the extended family. Then it has an interesting paragraph in Leviticus 18:19-23. The text goes on to suggest that everything just written is an abomination and pollutes the land of Israel. This concept of solidarity of individual and community is not one that our culture shares. We understand that individuals are responsible for their behavior. However, it underscores the seriousness of these forms of behavior to the author. I would suggest that, using discernment, many of these forms of behavior ought to remain concerns.

The code goes on to command respect to parents, keeping Sabbath, no worshipping idols, and not making images. They are to eat their whole sacrifice of well-being on the same day. They are to care for the poor by not harvesting the field to the edges so that the poor may gather some of the fruit of the land. They shall not steal, deal falsely, or lie. They shall not swear falsely or use the name of the Lord in a profane way. They shall not defraud or steal, and shall pay daily wages. They shall not treat the deaf or blind with contempt. They shall render just judgment and not favor the poor over the rich. They shall not slander others. They are not hate in their hearts a member of the family.

They are to correct their neighbor when needed. They shall not love their neighbor as themselves. They are to breed their animals in the right way.

The code comes back to sexuality, only this time between a man and his female slave. They are not to eat the fruit of the land for three years. They are not to practice augury or witchcraft. They shall cut their hair properly. They shall not mark their bodies. Back to sexuality, they shall not allow daughters to become prostitutes. They are not to turn to mediums or wizards. They are to respect the aged. They shall not oppress the foreigner. They shall not cheat in business. They shall not offer their children for sacrifice to God. Back to sexuality, they are not to commit adultery under penalty of death, a man is not to have sex with his mother or mother-in-law, or sister. Here is an interesting paragraph in Leviticus 20:10-16. The text continues with a description of the holiness of priests. It also prescribes what constitutes an acceptable offering, making it clear that the priest has the power to declare an offering acceptable or unacceptable. It describes festivals for the Sabbath, Passover, and Unleavened Bread. It describes offering of first fruits. It describes the festival of weeks and the festival of trumpets. It describes the Day of Atonement and the festival of booths. It describes various sacred objects: lamp and bread of the tabernacle. We also find an unusual story in which they took one who blasphemed Moses outside the camp and stoned him to death. It then added these brief laws in Leviticus 24:17-21. It institutes the sabbatical year, in which the law repealed debts garnered during the previous six. The Holiness Code concludes with a list of rewards and punishments for the nation, depending on whether they keep the commandments or disobey them.

Most scholars agree that the statements "You shall not …" have a special place in the sense that their form suggests a boundary beyond which the people of the covenant are to cross. Several such statements occur in Leviticus Chapter 18 and 19 regarding sexuality. My suspicion is that such boundaries beyond which the people of the covenant are not to cross contain commandments with which most of us are quite comfortable. They represent proper boundaries of sexual behavior. We have a problem with one, related to homosexual behavior, but we simply need to admit that this prohibition creates a problem. I do not think explaining it away is helpful to the biblical argument.

In fact, I would consider the boundaries established by the other short, "You shall not" statements represent some good guidelines of behavior.

> Chapter 19
> [4] Do not turn to idols or make cast images for yourselves: I am the LORD your God.
> [10] You shall not strip your vineyard bare, or gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the alien: I am the LORD your God.
> [11] You shall not steal;
> you shall not deal falsely;
> and you shall not lie to one another.
> [12] And you shall not swear falsely by my name, profaning the name of your God: I am the LORD.
> [13] You shall not defraud your neighbor;
> you shall not steal;
> and you shall not keep for yourself the wages of a laborer until morning.
> [14] You shall not revile the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind; you shall fear your God: I am the LORD.
> [15] You shall not render an unjust judgment;
> you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbor.
> [16] You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people,
> and you shall not profit by the blood of your neighbor: I am the LORD.
> [17] You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin;
> [18] You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.

[26] You shall not eat anything with its blood.
You shall not practice augury or witchcraft.
[27] You shall not round off the hair on your temples or mar the edges of your beard.
[28] You shall not make any gashes in your flesh for the dead or tattoo any marks upon you: I am the LORD.
[35] You shall not cheat in measuring length, weight, or quantity.

I grant that verses 19:13c, 26a, 27, 28 appear to have a cultural context modern people no longer share. I would not imagine that we would have much problem with other prohibitions. The point is that this code attempts to recognize boundaries between the behavior of the people of the covenant and the behavior of neighbors. My further point is that many of these boundaries, and in particular with sexuality, remains quite proper. These prohibitions are not simply casuistic or legal. They are moral boundaries in our relationship with people. They express a portion of the covenant relationship people have with God and their covenant obligation toward each other.

I realize that in some places of biblical interpretation, one simply needs to admit difference. What I would suggest, however, is that the boundaries of sexual practice in this code are part of the continuing dialogue within the Bible about what is proper sexual expression within Israel and in the context of its covenant with God. I do not think that regulations regarding priests and sacrifices carry the same weight from the standpoint of the church. Further, I would suggest that penalties recommended go directly against the command of Jesus. However, this does not remove the priority that we need to give to the discussion the holiness code on moral behavior. I would suggest that recommendations for caring for the poor and for canceling debt call for far more attention than churches have given in the past. In fact, many who are liberal in their politics use such legal texts in the Old Testament quite freely, while explaining away the prohibitions on

homosexuality. Consequently, I am sure you would agree that other regulations concerning sexual expression, such as not having sex with close family members or the spouse of one's neighbor are abiding rules for the people of God. I am not convinced that the brief "you shall not" in reference to homosexual behavior should be isolated and treated in a different way when we consider what the biblical tradition teaches about homosexual practice.

The Christian tradition has its roots in the strong Jewish opposition to this practice. Wisdom of Solomon 14:26 refers to sexual perversion. The Epistle of Aristeas (175 BC) in 152 refers to men who defile themselves in their relationships and procure the males. Philo in *Abr*. 135-137. *Spec. Leg.* in 3.37-42. The *Sibylline Oracles* (164 BC) have several references. 3:184-86. 764. 594-600 refers to intercourse with male children. *Ps. Phoc.* (30 BC-40 AD), in 3 refers to not arousing homosexual passion. 190-192 refers to homosexual practice and lesbian practice. 213-214 refers to intercourse with boys. Josephus, in *Ap.* 2.273-75 (90 AD in Book II. 25), says the laws of marriage in Jewish life abhor mixture of male with male. In the Testament of Levi 14.6, 17.11 and in Testament of Naphtali 4.1 there are references to Sodom. Homosexuality is often linked with idolatry, for both demean people. Link with the Fall and with sexual perversion is also typical.

I would now like to consider the reference to Romans 1:18-32. Some persons argue that, based upon what Paul says here, if a person honored God, they could engage in same sex relationships and not fall under the judgment of Paul. We may simply have to differ here. Paul assumes a volitional element to homosexual practice. His reference to "natural" assumes the unnatural and disordered nature of homosexual practice. Many

modern persons would disagree with this assessment, but we can agree that Paul gives a clear “no” to same sex unions. What I see is that one of the consequences of failing to honor God is all kinds of degrading passions, and homosexual expression is one among many, as stated in Romans 1:29-31, I Corinthians 6:9-11, and I Timothy 1:9-10.

arsenokoi is a word for which Arndt and Gingrich recommend “male homosexual, pederast, sodomite” as translations. The Anchor Bible translates as “male homosexual.” According to Louw-Nida Lexicon says arsenokoi is a male partner in homosexual intercourse - 'homosexual.' It is possible that arsenokoi in certain contexts refers to the active male partner in homosexual intercourse in contrast with malakoi, the passive male partner. The Freiberg Lexicon defines it as an adult male who practices sexual intercourse with another adult male or a boy homosexual, sodomite, pederast. Our language uses sodomy as an offensive term for anal sex, and even a term applied to sex with animals. Our language uses pederast as a term for a man who has sex with a boy. My understanding is that this form of sexual expression did not include anal sex in the ancient Greek context. I share this because the preponderance of scholarly study supports reference in these words to same sex practice. Further, the caution is appropriate here as to the nature of the act rejected by the Bible. What our culture knows in terms of sexual orientation is unknown to the New Testament authors.

As far as I can understand it, the behavior to which Paul and the author of Timothy refer to is any kind of same sex contact. The New Testament at that point is quite consistent with the Holiness Code and with Jewish sexual practice. It also distinguishes Jewish and Christian sexual behavior from Greek and Roman behavior, which accepted homosexual behavior among bathhouses of the cities. Platonic dialogues

assume the value of philosophers having same sex relationships as a way of bonding males to each other. The natural acceptance of this behavior was alive and well in Palestine in the time of Jesus, for the Romans built a city within easy observation of Capernaum. Jesus would have seen this same sex contact, and did not endorse it. The same is true of Paul.

Concerning homosexual practice and the biblical text: dialogue or monologue?

The Bible invites those who take it seriously to continue the conversation in many matters of our ethics and values. Christians continued the dialogue on slavery, and rightly concluded (finally) that the best situation was to prohibit slavery, because as an institution it trended toward abusive relationships. Many churches have re-thought the role of women in the ordained ministry of the church on the same basis. A close examination of the biblical text on divorce reveals a trend from absolute forbidding of divorce and remarriage and toward affirmation of divorce and remarriage in certain circumstances, such as adultery and an unbeliever leaving the believing spouse. The Christian tradition continued to discuss the proper grounds for divorce, such as violence done by one spouse to another, and so on. My point is that when the Bible initiates such a conversation within the text, it is quite appropriate for the church to continue the conversation. My intention in sharing the examples of divorce and remarriage after divorce is to suggest that the Bible itself carries on a dialogue about such matters. The early tradition of the church in its ecumenical councils continued that conversation with the text. We need discernment of the biblical text and the tradition of the church to continue the conversation. The tradition has often considered this conversation and has developed it on various topics, such as marriage as a partnership rather than marriage as hierarchy and women in ministry. Further, we could also apply this principle of

conversation and moving beyond the biblical text to the modern development of democratic institutions and the modern economic system of free enterprise, both of which are contrary to the political and economic assumptions of the Bible.

Now, having spent time on texts that relate specifically to homosexuality, what I found the most persuasive perspective from which to understand sexuality in the Bible and Christian tradition is to view it as a concern for proper personal sexual expression and for the preservation of the family. We have already noted that the reference in Genesis is to male and female in sexual union. The theological references to God and Israel are to that between husband and wife. Jesus refers to a man leaving his parents and uniting to his wife, suggesting, I think, the intent of God at creation for the ideal pattern for marriage. Paul refers to marriage as that between husband and wife. His counsel for the Christian household assumes such a structure for the family. I would suggest that if one takes his counsel seriously, the traditional hierarchical arrangement of the family transforms into a mutually giving and receiving partnership of love, respect, and grace. He also refers to the marriage between Christ as the husband and the church as the bride. With all that the Bible discusses concerning "You shall not …" with sexual expression, we must not forget what it positively says about marriage and sexual expression by the people of God. The Bible assumes marriage means a life-long, loving and sexual relationship between a man and a woman.

Of course, the practice of marriage has changed over the centuries. Biblical examples abound with men having wives, concubines, and slaves as their sexual partners. At the same time, the concern was for establishing boundaries for sexual expression. A master cannot have sex with a married slave, for example. A man cannot have sex with

the wife of another man. Such limits show a concern for the social fabric that can easily tear and become violent over violations of proper boundaries. Further, the New Testament resolves the matter of monogamy. I believe it did so, based upon the theological persuasiveness of the need for faithfulness between God and Israel, Christ and Church, and husband and wife. The point is, in addition to the "No" God gives in providing boundaries, God has said a "Yes" to the potential that a faithful, loving union between and woman, normally resulting in children, can have for the best human life possible.

The struggle I have with the biblical portion of the discussion on homosexual behavior as a Christian expression of sexuality is that the Bible does not have a dialogue about it. The Bible carries on a monologue about several matters concerning sexuality. It forbids intercourse among close family members, with the spouse of a neighbor, with animals, and it forbids same sex sexual relationships. It seems to me that we need to be honest at that point. Such an observation does not end the discussion. It does not necessarily determine what the church should do today. If the church accepts homosexual behavior as a valid expression of sexuality, it would have to do it on another basis than the biblical argument.

Pastoral Considerations

At this point, my assumption is that we all recognize that society ought not to allow the denial of civil rights based upon sexual orientation. Further, Christians owe to their neighbors one thing: love. Any personal ridicule of an individual because of their sexual orientation is also "incompatible with Christian teaching." Every person deserves respect as a child of God.

Here is the vision I have in front of me. What do I as pastor say to the same-sex couple who comes to me, affirms faith in Christ, and wants to unite to the Christian community in baptism, membership, Christian discipleship and leadership, and potentially in parish ministry? Of course, I would affirm my personal relationship with them and my love for them. I would probably explore with them their sense of the source of their homosexuality.

I would want the couple to know that, if they have experienced hurt from the churches or from Christians, I am sorry. I would remind them that Jesus was open to all persons, had compassion on all persons, and that God calls upon Christians to love their neighbors.

I would want to tell them that they are more than their sexual orientation. I would hope that they do not deny to themselves friendships with the same gender without feeling sexual attraction, as well as the ability to have friendships with the opposite gender. Such friendships are equally important in their development as human beings.

I would also talk with them about biologically healthy sex. In particular, the male homosexual has a tendency to have sex in a biologically unhealthy way. As a friend and pastor, I would want to be sure that they were safe. Other genetic dispositions can cause social problems. Alcoholism may arise from a genetic disposition toward it. Consequently, anyone with a family history of alcoholism will need to modify behavior accordingly. Sadly, many people are born with certain diseases or dispositions with which they must learn to live. The church would hardly be compassionate if it did not help. The same is true with homosexual orientation.

I would share with them my understanding that Christianity would guide them toward celibacy. For some, this would be like consigning them to hell. However, the focus upon the sex act in our society gives us the impression that few experiences are more important than intercourse. I would share that their genetic disposition may open them to creativity in other areas of life. I would share that the sexual desire for the same gender crosses a boundary to which the Bible says, "No." Further, I would suggest that the fullness of human life is partially the result of friendship with both genders.

Sometimes, pastoral care involves telling persons something they do not want to hear. If we cannot say such things in love, we ought not to say them. In matters of sexuality, I have shared with couples living together that God has another plan. I have shared that God values life, and thus that abortion is not the best option. I have shared that maybe a couple should wait until they have worked through some issues before they are married. The point is that pastoral care is not always a matter of affirming what people are already doing. In the matter of homosexual practice, I would not want to convey that it fulfills the plan of God for them for sexual union.

Ecclesial Considerations on moral and spiritual guidance today

I would suggest that the Bible is cultural throughout, which is simply to say that human beings can only hear and discern within space and time. The church is cultural throughout its history. The formation of the canon was a theological process in which the church considered that texts addressed to a specific time had normative significance for the church. We search for timeless, eternal, absolute, and universal truth. What we discover is that any truth we find has human boundaries with which to contend. Human beings stand somewhere, and because of that, we always have a perspective that determines what we see and do not see. We can see things only from a human

perspective, which means imperfectly and from personal and cultural perspectives. The unity that the Holy Spirit provides over the ages is an energy that we can trust to lead us. Whether the church of Jesus Christ re-affirms the boundaries on sexual expression set within the Bible, or moves in a different direction, only the power of those beliefs and practices in the hearts and minds of the Christian community will determine which course of action will prove true. This openness of truth to the future is an important awareness for us because the power of truth in moral matters is the power to persuade people to live by the values they teach. That spirit is one I would wish the church could have to carry this discussion forward. We need to consider seriously whether homosexual practice has the potential of being a genuinely loving and just relationship. The alternative is to suggest that something about the relationship is inherently unfulfilling, unjust and unloving.

We cannot carry the discussion forward if we continue to divide over this matter. The church needs this discussion for a simple reason. We need each other. People whom I know reasonably well would disagree with my understanding of the biblical text. I need conversation with them in the context of this denomination. We do not need mainline denominations dividing over this matter. I urge those who want to change this value of the New Testament and the church to re-consider their drive toward division, schism, and sectarianism. This is a serious matter in that you are asking the church to move against the view of Jesus on marriage and Paul on the matter of vice and virtue. If the church needs to move this direction, (clearly, I do not think so), it needs to do so as much as possible in a conciliar way. This does not mean simply within a denomination, but in conversation with other denominations with whom one has relation. We have had

denominational antagonism for too long. Even if Protestants do not have a pope to decide these matters, we do have the choice to enter into dialogue with other denominations who may disagree, and to have dialogue with global Christianity in ways that can enrich each other. I cannot agree with the way the proponents of this change have promoted their vision.

Peter J. Gomes, in *The Good Book*, 1996, has presented in popular format the reasons why he believes the church needs to change its views regarding homosexuality.

> We must change our position on homosexuality if that position is based upon a prejudicial and uninformed reading of scripture. Our fundamental stance on biblical authority ought by no means to be an absolute; that is a form of Protestant idolatry. Indeed, our core view of sexuality ought to change, and must, and the "meaning and character of Christ's call on our lives" thus is not merely changed but enlarged to reflect a dynamic and inclusive gospel.
>
> What is at stake is not simply the authority of scripture, as conservative opponents to homosexual legitimization like to say, but the authority of the culture of interpretation by which these people read scripture in such a way as to lend legitimacy to their doctrinaire prejudices. Thus the battle for the Bible, of which homosexuality is the last front, is really the battle for the prevailing culture, of which the Bible itself is a mere trophy and icon. Such a cadre of cultural conservatives would rather defend their ideology in the name of the authority of scripture than concede that their self-serving reading of that scripture might just be wrong, and that both the Bible and the God who inspires it may be more gracious, just, and inclusive than they can presently afford to be.
>
> The biblical writers never contemplated a form of homosexuality in which loving, monogamous, and faithful persons sought to live out the implications of the gospel with as much fidelity to it as any heterosexual believer. All they knew of homosexuality was prostitution, pederasty, lasciviousness, and exploitation. These vices, as we know, are not unknown among heterosexuals, and to define contemporary homosexuals only in these terms is a cultural slander of the highest order, reflecting now so much prejudice, which it surely does, but what the Roman Catholic Church calls "invincible ignorance," which all of the Christian piety and charity in the world can do little to conceal. The "problem," of course, is not the Bible, it is the Christians who read it.

I quote Rev. Gomes at length because he represents the depths of sin to which the church has taken this discussion. His book is quite readable and, in most cases, excellent. He deals more honestly than most pastors in discussing the place of the Bible in the

formation of our beliefs. I am offended by his description of me as having a "prejudicial and uninformed reading of scripture." His statement that I have "doctrinaire prejudices" offends me. I do not want to defend my ideology. Nor are my beliefs simply a "self-serving reading of that scripture." Further, we can all agree that the homosexual is our neighbor, and that God calls us to love them and treat them justly. His reference to me as having "invincible ignorance" is particularly offensive. From one Christian to another, he tells me that I am the "problem," that, I assume, must go away in order for the church to advance.

My personalization of what Rev. Gomes says is my way of stating what I think is the obvious. The church cannot sit down and rationally discuss this issue with each other. We can only question the motives of others. We call each other names. One of the favorite ways to win an argument today is to impugn the intentions and character of the other side. We resort to such tactics because our argument is weak and ineffective. We are not really after truth. We are after power.

First, my discomfort over discussing these matters is that the church has so many pressing issues facing it. Mainline churches have focused upon this issue as if it is the only issue. We have matters relating to strengthening families that needs the attention of the church. I am increasingly concerned that the witness of the church in a secular society experiences great harm because faith in Christ does not bring Christians together, as denominations cling to their distinctive traditions.

Second, my discomfort over discussing these matters is that it leads to the impression that homosexual behavior is somehow worse than other sexual sins. I am uncomfortable with making any set of sins "worse" than another is, for the temptation is

for those who do not do it to have a sense of superiority to those who do. Theologically, every human being is a sinner. Human beings unite in this experience. No one has the right to feel superior to another or to behave in a superior way toward another. No one has the right to condemn another. I can see where someone may read the Bible differently on this matter, but it does appear that the Bible is quite concerned that we appropriately express our sexuality. I realize that we can slip into thinking that sexual sins are somehow worse than any other sin is, but that is not my point. The point is that this area of sexuality and the family is quite important in the biblical text.

Third, my discomfort is that Christians have too often used this discussion as a reason to deny the sacred worth and dignity of other persons. Jesus commanded us to love our neighbors. We do not ask what religion they are, what denomination they belong to, what color of skin they have, what economic class to which they belong, or what sexual orientation they have.

Fourth is a matter unique to the United Methodist Church. In matters of ordination, we have what we call open itinerancy. It means that the bishop has the right to appoint any ordained member of the church in good standing to any church the bishop chooses. The Annual Conference must place such persons in a ministry setting. This matter of church polity, in my mind, heightens the matter of ordaining persons who engage in homosexual behavior. With a church polity in which the local church hires the pastor, and the bishop simply is part of the process, the situation would be quite different. Denominations agree that no one has the right to ordination. Ordination is not a graduation service. The church must confirm the call individuals sense in their lives. Part of that confirmation is that the minister leads a life worthy of that calling.

Fifth, I have much concern over the way mainline churches have considered this matter. We have approached it as a matter of church politics and law. The reality is that this is not simply a technical change that some Christians want. It is a change in our beliefs and values. The church needs to have ways of engaging this conversation with the body of Christ in a way that invites full participation of those affected by such changes. The United Methodist Church has shown it has the capacity to do this. It has produced a set of social principles. It has also produced a wonderful document on baptism. It passed a wonderful document on the Eucharist in 2004. The church has the capacity to address important matters biblically and theologically. The church needs to consider such an approach in the matter of human sexuality. It needs to give spiritual guidance in matters with which many church members struggle today. This matter is not limited to homosexuality. Heterosexual persons also struggle with matters of adultery and divorce. I am not astute enough to figure out how that conversation can take place. I do know that if a change is to take place, the church will need to do it at a level different from parliamentary procedures, church law, and political power. As I have suggested, I am not convinced a change in the historic stance of the churches concerning homosexual behavior needs to take place. If it does need to happen, if that is the direction God leads the church, we need to engage the discussion in a different way than we have done thus far. The point is that we need to be open to each other in the discussion and in discerning the direction God leads the church. That means those who want to be faithful to the Bible in this matter need to be in a mindset of openness to hear why other Christians still want a change. It also means openness on the part of those who want change to consider the possibility that the Bible has good, healthy, and mature reasons for maintaining that

human beings will find a lasting, loving relationship between a man and a woman as the best means to a genuinely happy life.

Sixth, I would like to suggest that, given the monologue that scripture and tradition have concerning homosexual practice, (both scripture and tradition have a simple answer: You shall not), the only possible basis for change is that our culture experiences something previous cultures have not. Proponents of change will need to provide biblically and theologically sound arguments for making such a change. Christians in America would not own slaves and would consider such ownership unchristian, even though the New Testament assumes slavery is a social practice. Christians today have done so, based upon the worth and dignity of each individual as created by God. Some denominations have accepted women clergy. They do so based upon reasoning from Acts 2, and the fact that the Holy Spirit falls upon sons and daughters to prophecy. Women also led some of the house churches of Paul. However, they do so against the tradition from II Timothy 2:9-14 that only men can be ministers. Many churches have chosen to deal more generously with divorced persons, based upon the discussion within the New Testament concerning proper grounds for divorce and re-marriage. Beyond adultery and abandonment, the churches typically consider physical abuse grounds for divorce and re-marriage. My point is that the Christian community makes such changes, based upon the best reasons provided for making such a change. What might such an argument look like for a change in the acceptance of homosexual practice? The argument would suggest that our culture has seen the arrival of homosexual practice that is loving, mutually supportive, and just in its relationship, and therefore deserves the blessing of the church. Because one might consider this possibility as new,

and therefore something the Old Testament, Jesus, Paul, the apostolic churches, or the tradition of the church, did not encounter, one could argue that the church needs to adapt. My personal experience in this area is limited enough that I do not feel competent enough to make a definitive judgment. I also admit that I am quite hesitant to move against the wisdom of 3000 years of consistent biblical and church teaching. However, I am open enough to realize that the conversation needs to take place.

Seventh, the scientific and biological matters ought not to carry too much weight, for sexual expression proper for a Christian is primarily a matter of moral and spiritual guidance that the church offers its members and its culture. However, modern science raises the question of what the churches do with someone who has a genetic sexual orientation toward the same gender. I recognize that some persons may have a same sex orientation because of a disordered life in the home. Such persons may need extensive emotional and spiritual healing in order to have healthy sexual relationships. Further, in mature sexual relationships, sexual intimacy binds partners together in profound ways and many levels. For this bond to occur between the sexes means that we enter into relationship with one genuinely other from ourselves. The experience of the genuinely other helps us grow in our sense of humanity. Jesus at least raises the question of whether people who deny themselves the gift of sexual union with someone of the opposite sec may also deny themselves the fullness of their humanity.

> Mark 10:6-9 (NRSV)
> [6] But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' [7] 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, [8] and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one flesh. [9] Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

The point Jesus makes here brings us to the intent of God in the creation of male and

female. Gender is the one distinction made at creation. Wealth, social position, and race, do not matter in creation. We are not wealthy by nature. We are not masters and slaves by nature. We do not even have racial distinction by nature. However, we are human beings as males and females by nature. Jesus lifts before the reader the ideal, recognizing that human beings fall short of the ideal established in creation. Of course, heterosexuals fall short of the ideal as well. Multiple sex partners before marriage, adultery, and divorce, are all examples of that fact. However, we are human beings only as male and female. Do people who, whether for genetic or psychological reasons, do not enter into an intimate friendship with the opposite sex deny to themselves the fullness of their humanity? I think Jesus at raises this question.

Further, although one approach to the biological evidence is to focus upon the genetic pre-disposition toward same gender attraction, we might also approach the biological evidence from another perspective. Without going into much detail, man and woman fit together physically quite naturally. Our genes seem hard-wired to reproduce themselves. I refer here to the work of Robert Wright, *The Moral Animal* and to Richard Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene*. People can do this most naturally in relationships between men and women. I recognize that science may progress to a point where one does not need the opposite sex to reproduce, but that is not a prominent way of reproducing at this point. If human genes are hard-wired to reproduce, one ought to have no fear in making sure that those who pursue same sex relationships have all the civil rights of any other citizen. Same sex relationships will never become widely spread because it goes so much against nature.

Eighth, when it comes to our culture, I think the church needs to understand that a

free, democratic, and secular society will follow paths the church cannot follow. It does not mean the church should oppose those paths politically. It does mean that Christians in that setting need to have the strength to be who they are, in contrast to the culture. In other words, we are in a situation similar to that of the first Christians, who lived in a society that had no Christian influence. The church needs to support full civil rights for persons who engage in homosexual behavior. To refuse this is to suggest that somehow this behavior is worse than any other behavior is.

Ninth, as an outsider to the Anglican Communion, I have so little knowledge of the inner workings of the system that anything I say may have little relevance. The decision of the American Episcopal Church to ordain a gay bishop has introduced another tension within the Christian community. The question I would offer is a matter of discerning the direction God is leading the church. Discernment requires some sort of sifting process, dividing wheat from chaff, so to speak. As one looks at the response of the worldwide Anglican Communion, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Pope, does it make anyone in the Episcopal Church in America want to go back and re-visit its decisions? I do not mean the decision was wrong. I would ask questions like these. Did the denomination move ahead of itself or move too quickly? Is the denomination concerned that this direction will harm ecumenical relationships with other denominations? Is it really willing to risk division internally and with the world Anglican churches over this matter? Could it be that American Anglican bishops need to engage the bishops of other lands as to why they think this is the proper direction for the church? The failure to have some openness to re-consider suggests an elite approach to truth in which the American Episcopalians offer a pronouncement on high. Once again, we are

dealing with the beliefs and values of people. It seems to me that the church needs to have a different process than simply power politics on either side.

The Bible also recognizes that human beings cross the boundaries set in the Bible regularly. The Holiness Code of Leviticus 17-26 is one example. It gives guidance on many matters, but the guidance it gives on human sexual experience is my focus. Males are the object of most of these prohibitions. The text gives a clear no. Men ought not to have intercourse with a woman in her menstrual cycle, commit adultery, have same gender intercourse, or have intercourse with an animal. Sons ought not to have intercourse with their mothers, nor fathers with their daughters or daughters in law, or have intercourse with his wife and mother in law. The text gives a general prohibition of sexual relationships with anyone who has a close family connection, such as nephew, niece, aunt, and uncle. Brothers and sisters are not to have intercourse with each other.

Although not quite as specific, the New Testament also offers its list of sexual activities that transgress the boundaries of acceptable Christian behavior: Adulteries, Fornication, Impurity, Licentiousness, Male prostitutes (*malakoi),* and Sodomites *arsenokoitai*.

When it comes to sexual boundaries in the biblical tradition, the apodictic argument is typical: “You shall not.” This form of argument assumes that what it prohibits is self-evident. The statement does not require rational argument in its favor, for the writer considers its truth as obvious. It does not consider the possibility that its opposite might be true. Of course, modern society no longer considers the sexual boundaries I have discussed as self-evident. In that setting, the church will need to

consider whether it can arrive at satisfactory reasons for continuing these boundaries, or making reasonable adjustments. The modern church will have to persuade others in ways other than apodictic statements. My own approach is to suggest a form of argument that lays before others our core convictions, the vision of a form of life among Christians and within the church, and determine those places where we can be together and where we must separate.

Modern society offers individuals great freedom to find what they believe to be the best human life. Consistent with this value of the individual, the church recognizes that all persons have sacred worth and dignity grounded in the divine origin of their lives. All persons deserve love and respect as children of God. Yet, the church recognizes that the abuse of freedom actually makes one a slave to passions and desires that inhibit one from leading the best human life and Christian life they could lead. Even modern society recognizes that many of the prohibitions that date back to the Holiness Code remain in effect. Far from wanting to put people into bondage, the church offers its wisdom in the area of human sexuality out of love for others. In particular, people may sincerely believe that their sexual desire is God-given, even where it moves in territory outside the boundaries established in the Bible and in the teaching of Jesus. In other words, the perversion of sexual desire is possible. As with any gift of God, human beings can become confused emotionally or downright evil in the exercise of God-given desire. Our society has seen the potential for re-defining what constitutes family. Society has done this in the past. It often experiments with polygamy, with mistresses, and with prostitution. It encourages “free love,” as if sex without commitment and affection is an ideal toward which individuals should strive. Most immediately, this has meant defining

marriage and family to include same-gender relationships. We might also wonder if society will also accept as family units polygamous relationships as well. Two questions society must raise is that if there are boundaries in terms of sexual expression, where will society draw them? What context is best for children? Since one of the areas the church has always exerted its greatest influence is the family, such societal changes affect the life of church. They are important discussions because they affect core beliefs and values of those involved. The position of the church is reasonably simple. The best family context for children is where husband and wife remain together faithfully and lovingly. In this situation, children have the greatest possibility of maturing in reasonably healthy ways into adult life. The proper place to express oneself sexually is in the relationship of husband and wife.

The well-being of individuals and the manner in which human society finds itself linked together has its source in the human community called family and marriage. The family is an intimate community, a school of deeper humanity. It needs a generous communion of minds and hearts and deliberation between spouses and deliberation between parents and children. Children need the kind of education that will help them engage society in a meaningful and responsible way and form families of their own. Various generations often come together in the family. They help each other grow in wisdom. They help harmonize personal rights with responsibilities to a community. Political and economic leaders have an interest in recognizing the dignity of the family, protecting it, and promoting it. The advancement of the well-being of domestic life enhances broader human society.

Our society has witnessed increasing awareness of the nature of sexual orientation. Questions of sexual orientation bring one beyond biblical awareness or the discussions in the traditions of the church. The Bible and church tradition know only the practice of heterosexuality or homosexuality. Matters of genetics and biology do not resolve such matters. The philosophical tradition has determined that in moral discourse, what is naturally does not determine what ought to be. If a particular gene determines an inclination toward same-gender sexual desire, we also know that genes want to be reproduced. We may also discover genes that will tend a person toward violence, although society will still hold such persons accountable for what they do with that tendency. Doctors fight against diseases instilled in the genes. Nature may give every individual a tendency in certain directions. However, family, community, culture, and personal responses to these factors, hold individuals responsible for the form their life takes. The argument from biology rarely gives answers in such matters because they involve the quality of our relationships with other persons. Biology cannot solve moral dilemmas. Human beings will still have to face each other, consider how they treat each other, and offer reasons for their behavior.

For some persons in the church, this awareness of sexual orientation suggests that faithful and loving same-gender relationships constitute a Christian ideal for individuals and families. They argue that the Old Testament, Jesus, and Paul, did not know of such relationships, and therefore did not address this possibility. They further compare the homosexual experience to that of slavery and racism, suggesting that normalizing homosexual practice is a matter of social justice. The church must also face the reality that some of its members believe their same-gender sexual orientation is a gift from God

to them. Learning from this view, the church reaffirms the sacred worth and dignity of all persons, regardless of sexual orientation. The church rejects discrimination solely because of sexual orientation, recognizing that some positions in some organizations will have moral reasons for making such hiring distinctions. The church rejects any form of physical or verbal abuse of persons with same-gender sexual orientation. Any church that makes homosexual persons uncomfortable in church has not modeled the compassion Jesus showed to the crowds. Consequently, lovingly embracing those whom we know as homosexual is simply another way of loving our neighbors. Christians love others, not because they believe the same or act acceptably, but because all persons are of sacred worth and dignity.

For other persons, the church best preserves its sacred text, its traditions, and its wisdom, by continuing encouraging the norm and ideal of faithful and loving relationships between husband and wife. These persons consider that homosexual practice opens itself to abuse of sexual desire: promiscuity, the violence of the sex act in male homosexuality, and the tendency toward eliminating sex in female homosexuality. In the matter of homosexual practice, neither the biblical tradition nor the Christian tradition contains any discussion on the matter of whether homosexuality is consistent with the Christian sexual ideal. In fact, homosexual practice receives a clear prohibition: "You shall not." In this fact, homosexuality differs from the matter of divorce, where the Bible begins a consideration of the proper conditions for divorce and the Christian tradition continued that discussion. It also differs from the social justice issue of slavery, where the New Testament begins a discussion of the role of the slave in the Christian community. The common basis of salvation is clear: In Christ, there is neither slave nor

free. The experience in the Christian community that united believers at the Lord's Table and in baptism was a sign of the future unity of humanity, regardless of economic class. Such considerations legitimately led the church to denounce slavery, even if such statements were entirely too late in history.

For these persons, the wisdom of the church concerning homosexual practice is consistent with the Christian and Jewish traditions, other religious traditions, and with many other cultures, in a way that makes it difficult to abrogate the prohibitions as easily as some appear to do. The church commits itself to open and honest dialogue on this matter. However, out of concern for its ecumenical relationships, concern for its sacred texts and traditions, its concern for the global Christian community, and its love for those who sense same-gender sexual orientation, the church cannot set forth any kind of same-gender relationship as an ideal toward which any Christian should strive. Further, the church continues to uphold as the Christian ideal the family of husband, wife, and children. The church embraces those families of divorce and single parent homes, providing a supportive and loving community. The church recognizes that Christians may well engage in same-gender relationships. The church recognizes that all persons sin and fall short of the glory of God. The church also recognizes that all of the vices listed in the New Testament direct themselves at the church and its members. If members of the church did not experience temptation to do them, and in fact practice them, the writers would hardly need to encourage their avoidance. All persons are of sacred worth and dignity, including those who commit any of the vices listed in the New Testament. The church remains hesitant to lift out one of the vices listed, homosexuality, and declare that the apostles got this one wrong, even while they got all the others right.

The church reminds all persons that in matters of human sexuality, as with all matters related relationships with other human beings, we remember these words of Paul:

> Philippians 4:8 (NRSV)
> Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

Government as defender of family

The family has enemies, and the government needs to exert its influence toward defending it at these points.

The obvious enemy comes from within the family. When members of the family exploit and abuse each other, the government has a responsibility to intervene. Such exploitation may occur in inappropriate sexual activity or physical violence. The extent to which parents in particular inflict such harm upon each other or upon their children, the government has a responsibility to intervene.

Our society has seen an explosion in sexual experimentation, beginning increasingly early and continuing increasingly late. When we treat intercourse in such a casual way, we also treat others and ourselves in casual ways.

This emphasis upon sexuality shows itself in sexual harassment. Harassment is about the abuse of power as much as it is about the perversion of our sexual desire. We degrade each other along such paths. God calls human beings to show hospitality and a welcoming spirit to others. Sexual harassment is the opposite of such respect for the human dignity of others. The church extends love and forgiveness to all persons, regardless of their sexual history. The church extends the same love and forgiveness to those of its own membership who become confused in this area of life. Yet, the Christian

ideal remains that of preserving sexual expression in the context of the faithful and loving relationship of husband and wife.

Abortion is a threat to the family. Before I share why, I realize that my brief comments will persuade no one. I do find it rather ridiculous that some who oppose abortion will do violence to those doctors and nurses who do the procedure. The inconsistency in respect for life is large. I do not find it helpful to the witness of the church to have Christians protesting outside places that permit abortion. Too often, such demonstrations reflect hatred toward the medical persons and hatred toward those having the procedure. These persons are our neighbors. There are other ways to demonstrate genuine Christian caring for the life of the health professionals, the life of the parents and the fetus. In addition, I have great hesitation to use the power of the political state to enforce a Christian understanding of respect for life. It brings the church into the matter of power politics and special interest groups in Washington DC. The church needs to do what it can in its local ministries, and perhaps occasionally through media, to encourage respect for sexuality in the community, and given pregnancies that biological parents do not want, provide options. The church needs to be persuasive in civil society and voluntary behavior, both by its teaching and by its behavior, to lead the way in such a matter.

Technology has also provided us with the opportunity to know if the fetus will produce a healthy human being. Christians must also face the matter of rape and incest and the possible children that would result. It will not surprise anyone who has read this far that I am unwilling to make a rule. Rather, I am more interested in character, and then, faced with such boundary situations, trust them to do the right thing.

Less drastic solutions are available to people than abortion. I would encourage Christians who face such decisions to consider seriously seeking those solutions. The fetus had no choice in its conception or in its DNA strands that will set many of the conditions the fetus will have as a human life. Males and females can choose to abstain from sex. One can use contraception. Given the conception of the child, and given discomfort of the biological parents to raise the child, the option of adoption exists. The fetus is the innocent one in the equation.

Within the church, abortion is not a matter the Bible faces in the same way that modern society does.

First, a rule-oriented approach to the Bible is not helpful as we consider the passage from Exodus 21:22-23. The natural approach to this text is that the Old Testament, in this particular case, makes a distinction between killing the fetus and killing an adult. On this basis, one could legitimately argue for some sort of distinction today. With increasing technology, it does not answer the question of that distinction.

Second, I suggest that one element of the abortion question is the proper expression of our love for another human being. The church begins with certain assumptions, among them being faithful and loving relationships between a man and a woman is the proper context for marriage. The Bible places a limit on the expression of sexual love. The counsel of the Bible at this point has the confirmation of many years of experience. The ability to remain faithful in the intimate relationship of marriage and family is an important indication of the kind of character one has developed. The willingness to do lie, sneak around, keep secrets, and break a promise to another human being, also reflect matters of character. The preservation of one's body sexually for one

to whom one willingly commits one's life also reflects recognition of the intimacy of the sexual act. The emotional and physical bond that can occur in expressing one's love sexually toward another is one that needs careful consideration. In any case, the Bible appears to give a clear "no" to expressing sexually one's love outside the context of the relationship of husband and wife. I recognize that technology has made it more likely today that one can have sex without the result of children. I would invite you to consider, however, that other matters still make the wisdom of the Bible on this matter quite sound. The result of such a decision by more people would mean fewer abortions.

Third, I would like to offer the wisdom that basic respect for life, leading a non-violent life, leading a life of compassion and love toward the other, is at stake in the matter of abortion. Once again, God calls us to hospitality and a welcoming spirit. In saying this, I do not particularly want to deal with the matter of personhood. I have not noticed that people are even persuadable on this matter. However, technology has helped us to determine that specifically human life begins when syngamy occurs, meaning egg and sperm unite in such a way that the chromosomes of male and female unite. This occurs at about 24 hours after fertilization. These DNA strands determine species-specific character of this new life. Further, the fetus registers pain at about 11 weeks. Clearly, the elements of what we typically think of as person are not present. The fetus does not experience pain until about 11 weeks. As far as we know, several activities of persons do not occur until one is out of the womb. For example, reasoning does not occur until one is out of the womb. One is not aware of external objects or aware of oneself. One slowly develops the ability to behave in ways not determined by genetic code. One needs to have the ability to communicate on a number of different topics. The question is whether the

beginning of human life makes it sufficient in our minds that person exists potentially, and therefore deserves our protection.

Death is a profoundly intimate and individual. Yet, it often includes a strong family connection. God calls us to show respect for worth and dignity of those in the process of dying. God calls us to show hospitality to them, even in their weakened condition.

Suicide is also an enemy of the family. In their history, the churches have often taught that suicide is the unforgivable sin. The desire to stop suicide has contradicted the call of Christ to show compassion. Churches have denied funerals and memorial services to bereaved families. They have banned the names of the victim from cemeteries. Churches need to renew their commitment to educate people regarding the causes of suicide, the signs that one might be heading in that direction, and to offer compassionate ministry to the grieving. All persons need to be mindful that the path to suicide is often that of mental illness and abuse of drugs, both of which call for compassion from others.

161

The community provides the potential for nurturing human beings into the fullness of their humanity. We believe we have a responsibility to innovate, sponsor, and evaluate new forms of community that will encourage development of the fullest potential in individuals. Primary for us is the gospel understanding that all persons are important—because they are human beings created by God and loved through and by Jesus Christ and not because they have merited significance. We therefore support social climates in which human communities are maintained and strengthened for the sake of all persons and their growth. We also encourage all individuals to be sensitive to others by using appropriate language when referring to all persons. Language of a derogatory nature (with regard to race, nationality, ethnic background, gender, sexuality, and physical difference) does not reflect value for one another and contradicts the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Family

We believe the family to be the basic human community through which persons are nurtured and sustained in mutual love, responsibility, respect, and fidelity. We affirm the importance of both fathers and mothers for all children. We also understand the family as encompassing a wider range of options than that of the two-generational unit of parents and children (the nuclear family), including the extended family, families with adopted children, single parents, stepfamilies, and couples without children. We affirm shared responsibility for parenting by men and women and encourage social, economic, and religious efforts to maintain and strengthen relationships within families in order that every member may be assisted toward complete personhood.

Other Christian Communities

We further recognize the movement to find new patterns of Christian nurturing communities such as Koinonia Farms, certain monastic and other religious orders, and some types of corporate church life. We urge the Church to seek ways of understanding the needs and concerns of such Christian groups and to find ways of ministering to them and through them.

The Social Principles recognize the possibility that some Christians will want to form new nurturing communities. The Book of Resolutions of 2004 mentions the Emmaus and Chrysalis communities receiving the support of the whole church.

Most of us have heard or read about monastic orders in the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches. It has a long history. Religious orders also are communities engaged in various forms mutual support and ministry. Monastic and religious orders is the religious practice in which one renounces worldly pursuits in order to fully devote one's life to spiritual work.

I am not sure what the Social Principles means by “some types of corporate church life.”

Koinonia Farms was founded in 1942 by two couples, Clarence and Florence Jordan and Martin and Mabel England, as a “demonstration plot for the Kingdom of God.” (Clarence Jordan) For them, this meant following the example of the first Christian

communities as described in the Acts of the Apostles, amid the poverty and racism of the rural South. The name Koinonia is an ancient Greek word, used often in the New Testament, meaning deep fellowship. Koinonia members divested themselves of personal wealth and joined a "common purse" economic system. They envisioned an interracial community where blacks and whites could live and work together in a spirit of partnership.

Based on their interpretation of the New Testament, Koinonia members committed to the following precepts:

> Treat all human beings with dignity and justice
> Choose love over violence
> Share all possessions and live simply
> Be stewards of the land and its natural resources
> Other families joined, and visitors came to “serve a period of apprenticeship in developing community life on the teachings and principles of Jesus.” Koinonians, visitors, and neighbors farmed, worshipped and ate together, attended Bible studies and held summer youth camps. When resources allowed the hiring of seasonal help, black and white workers were paid equally.

The farm became “koinonia partners” in the 1960’s. It became a social service organization, partnering with surrounding communities. In searching for a new purpose, it gave birth to Mildred and Linda Fuller’s vision of Habitat for Humanity.

This work included the founding of other organizations. Jubilee Partners is in Comer, GA (a community that welcomes refugees from war-torn countries). New Hope House is in Griffin, GA (assisting families with loved ones on death row, as well as advocating the abolition of the death penalty). The Prison & Jail Project is in Americus, GA (an antiracist, grassroots organization which monitors courtrooms, prisons and jails in southwest Georgia). The Fuller Center for Housing is the second organization founded

by Millard and Linda Fuller, also pursuing affordable housing solutions for impoverished families worldwide.

Koinonia members and ministries since 1969 include civil rights work, prison ministry, racial reconciliation, peace activism, early childhood education, youth and teen outreach, affordable housing, language training, sustainable agriculture, economic development, home repair, elder programs, and more. Current ministries include affordable home repair for neighbors, an elder program, a summer youth camp, welcoming visitors and guests in hospitality, and educating the public about Koinonia history and legacy.

Marriage

We affirm the sanctity of the marriage covenant that is expressed in love, mutual support, personal commitment, and shared fidelity between a man and a woman. We believe that God's blessing rests upon such marriage, whether or not there are children of the union. We reject social norms that assume different standards for women than for men in marriage. We support laws in civil society that define marriage as the union of one man and one woman.

The Social Principles are clear that marriage is between a man and a woman, seeking civil society to recognize marriage defined in this way. If a marriage does not result in children, it remains a blessing to those committed to it.

Divorce

God's plan is for lifelong, faithful marriage. The church must be on the forefront of premarital and postmarital counseling in order to create and preserve strong marriages. However, when a married couple is estranged beyond reconciliation, even after thoughtful consideration and counsel, divorce is a regrettable alternative in the midst of brokenness. We grieve over the devastating emotional, spiritual, and economic consequences of divorce for all involved and are concerned about high divorce rates. It is recommended that methods of mediation be used to minimize the adversarial nature and fault-finding that are often part of our current judicial processes. Although divorce publicly declares that a marriage no longer exists, other covenantal relationships resulting from the marriage remain, such as the nurture and support of children and extended

family ties. We urge respectful negotiations in deciding the custody of minor children and support the consideration of either or both parents for this responsibility in that custody not be reduced to financial support, control, or manipulation and retaliation. The welfare of each child is the most important consideration. Divorce does not preclude a new marriage. We encourage an intentional commitment of the Church and society to minister compassionately to those in the process of divorce, as well as members of divorced and remarried families, in a community of faith where God's grace is shared by all.

Single Persons

We affirm the integrity of single persons, and we reject all social practices that discriminate or social attitudes that are prejudicial against persons because they are single.

Women and Men

We affirm with Scripture the common humanity of male and female, both having equal worth in the eyes of God. We reject the erroneous notion that one gender is superior to another, that one gender must strive against another, and that members of one gender may receive love, power and esteem only at the expense of another.

We especially reject the idea that God made individuals as incomplete fragments, made whole only in union with another. We call upon women and men alike to share power and control, to learn to give freely and to receive freely, to be complete and to respect the wholeness of others. We seek for every individual opportunities and freedom to love and be loved, to seek and receive justice, and to practice ethical self-determination.

We understand our gender diversity to be a gift from God, intended to add to the rich variety of human experience and perspective; and we guard against attitudes and traditions that would use this good gift to leave members of one sex more vulnerable in relationships than members of another.

Our Social Principles "especially reject the idea that God made individuals as incomplete fragments, made whole only in union with another." I find this a curious statement. An individual human being is an "incomplete fragment." We grow into our humanity as we engage people in fellowship, cooperation, competition, and so on. We are social creatures. Our completion as individuals is beyond us, rather than embedded deeply within us.

This principle has its ground in creation, a reference to which we have already referred in the section on marriage.

Human Sexuality

We recognize that sexuality is God's good gift to all persons. We believe persons may be fully human only when that gift is acknowledged and affirmed by themselves, the church, and society. We call all persons to the disciplined, responsible fulfillment of themselves, others, and society in the stewardship of this gift. We also recognize our limited understanding of this complex gift and encourage the medical, theological, and social science disciplines to combine in a determined effort to understand human sexuality more completely. We call the Church to take the leadership role in bringing together these disciplines to address this most complex issue. Further, within the context of our understanding of this gift of God, we recognize that God challenges us to find responsible, committed, and loving forms of expression.

Although all persons are sexual beings whether or not they are married, sexual relations are only clearly affirmed in the marriage bond. Sex may become exploitative within as well as outside marriage. We reject all sexual expressions that damage or destroy the humanity God has given us as birthright, and we affirm only that sexual expression that enhances that same humanity. We believe that sexual relations where one or both partners are exploitative, abusive, or promiscuous are beyond the parameters of acceptable Christian behavior and are ultimately destructive to individuals, families, and the social order.

We deplore all forms of the commercialization and exploitation of sex, with their consequent cheapening and degradation of human personality. We call for strict global enforcement of laws prohibiting the sexual exploitation or use of children by adults and encourage efforts to hold perpetrators legally and financially responsible. We call for the establishment of adequate protective services, guidance, and counseling opportunities for children thus abused. We insist that all persons, regardless of age, gender, marital status, or sexual orientation, are entitled to have their human and civil rights ensured.

We recognize the continuing need for full, positive, age-appropriate and factual sex education opportunities for children, young people, and adults. The Church offers a unique opportunity to give quality guidance and education in this area.

Homosexual persons no less than heterosexual persons are individuals of sacred worth. All persons need the ministry and guidance of the church in their struggles for human fulfillment, as well as the spiritual and emotional care of a fellowship that enables reconciling relationships with God, with others, and with self. The United Methodist Church does not condone the practice of homosexuality and consider this practice incompatible with Christian teaching. We affirm that God's grace is available to all, and we will seek to live together in Christian community. We implore families and churches

not to reject or condemn lesbian and gay members and friends. We commit ourselves to be in ministry for and with all persons.1

1. See Judicial Council Decision 702.

We can assume that “commercialization and exploitation of sex” includes pornography. The Book of Resolutions 2004 suggests its linkage to the oppression of women. It arouses images of power and domination of one person over another, usually the male over the female. The images pornography present to us is those that negate human dignity, equality, and mutuality. It contributes to alienation in human relationships.

Family Violence and Abuse

We recognize that family violence and abuse in all its forms—verbal, psychological, physical, sexual— is detrimental to the covenant of the human community. We encourage the Church to provide a safe environment, counsel, and support for the victim. While we deplore the actions of the abuser, we affirm that person to be in need of God's redeeming love.

Sexual harassment

We believe human sexuality is God’s good gift. One abuse of this good gift is sexual harassment. We define sexual harassment as any unwanted sexual comment, advance or demand, either verbal or physical, that is reasonably perceived by the recipient as demeaning, intimidating, or coercive. Sexual harassment must be understood as an exploitation of a power relationship rather than as an exclusively sexual issue. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the creation of a hostile or abusive working environment resulting from discrimination on the basis of gender.

Contrary to the nurturing community, sexual harassment creates improper, coercive, and abusive conditions wherever it occurs in society. Sexual harassment undermines the social goal of equal opportunity and the climate of mutual respect between men and women. Unwanted sexual attention is wrong and discriminatory. Sexual harassment interferes with the moral mission of the Church.

The Book of Resolutions 2004 makes the point that God calls us to hospitality. Sexual harassment is rejection of that call.

Abortion

The beginning of life and the ending of life are the God-given boundaries of human existence. While individuals have always had some degree of control over when they would die, they now have the awesome power to determine when and even whether new individuals will be born.

Our belief in the sanctity of unborn human life makes us reluctant to approve abortion. But we are equally bound to respect the sacredness of the life and well-being of the mother, for whom devastating damage may result from an unacceptable pregnancy. In continuity with past Christian teaching, we recognize tragic conflicts of life with life that may justify abortion, and in such cases we support the legal option of abortion under proper medical procedures. We cannot affirm abortion as an acceptable means of birth control, and we unconditionally reject it as a means of gender selection.

We oppose the use of late-term abortion known as dilation and extraction (partial-birth abortion) and call for the end of this practice except when the physical life of the mother is in danger and no other medical procedure is available, or in the case of severe fetal anomalies incompatible with life. We call all Christians to a searching and prayerful inquiry into the sorts of conditions that may warrant abortion. We commit our Church to continue to provide nurturing ministries to those who terminate a pregnancy, to those in the midst of a crisis pregnancy, and to those who give birth. We particularly encourage the Church, the government, and social service agencies to support and facilitate the option of adoption. (See ¶ 161.K.)

Governmental laws and regulations do not provide all the guidance required by the informed Christian conscience. Therefore, a decision concerning abortion should be made only after thoughtful and prayerful consideration by the parties involved, with medical, pastoral, and other appropriate counsel.

Ministry to Those Who Have Experienced an Abortion

We urge local pastors to become informed about the symptoms and behaviors associated with post-abortion stress. We further encourage local churches to make available contact information for counseling agencies that offer programs to address post-abortion stress for all seeking help.

Adoption

Children are a gift from God to be welcomed and received. We recognize that some circumstances of birth make the rearing of a child difficult.

We affirm and support the birth parent(s) whose choice it is to allow the child to be adopted. We recognize the agony, strength, and courage of the birth parent(s) who choose(s) in hope, love, and prayer to offer the child for adoption.

In addition, we also recognize the anxiety, strength, and courage of those who choose in hope, love, and prayer to be able to care for a child.

We affirm and support the adoptive parent(s)' desire to rear an adopted child as they would a biological child. When circumstances warrant adoption, we support the use of proper legal procedures. When appropriate and possible, we encourage open adoption so that a child may know all information and people related to them, both medically and relationally. We support and encourage greater awareness and education to promote adoption of a wide variety of children through foster care, international adoption, and domestic adoption.

We commend the birth parent(s), the receiving parent(s), and the child to the care of the Church, that grief might be shared, joy might be celebrated, and the child might be nurtured in a community of Christian love.

Faithful care for dying persons

While we applaud medical science for efforts to prevent disease and illness and for advances in treatment that extend the meaningful life of human beings, we recognize that every mortal life will ultimately end in death. Death is never a sign that God has abandoned us, no matter what the circumstances of the death might be. As Christians we must always be prepared to surrender the gift of mortal life and claim the gift of eternal life through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Care for dying persons is part of our stewardship of the divine gift of life when cure is no longer possible. We encourage the use of medical technologies to provide palliative care at the end of life when life-sustaining treatments no longer support the goals of life, and when they have reached their limits. There is no moral or religious obligation to use these when they impose undue burdens or only extend the process of dying. Dying persons and their families are free to discontinue treatments when they cease to be of benefit to the patient.

We recognize the agonizing personal and moral decisions faced by the dying, their physicians, their families, their friends and their faith community. We urge that decisions faced by the dying be made with thoughtful and prayerful consideration by the parties involved, with medical, pastoral, and other appropriate counsel. We further urge that all persons discuss with their families, their physicians and their pastoral counselors, their wishes for care at the end of life and provide advance directives for such care when they are not able to make these decisions for themselves. Even when one accepts the inevitability of death, the church and society must continue to provide faithful care, including pain relief, companionship, support, and spiritual nurture for the dying person in the hard work of preparing for death. We encourage and support the concept of hospice care whenever possible at the end of life. Faithful care does not end at death but continues during bereavement as we care for grieving families.

Suicide

We believe that suicide is not the way a human life should end. Often suicide is the result of untreated depression, or untreated pain and suffering. The church has an

obligation to see that all persons have access to needed pastoral and medical care and therapy in those circumstances that lead to loss of self-worth, suicidal despair, and/or the desire to seek physician-assisted suicide. We encourage the church to provide education to address the biblical, theological, social, and ethical issues related to death and dying, including suicide. United Methodist theological seminary courses should also focus on issues of death and dying, including suicide.

A Christian perspective on suicide begins with an affirmation of faith that nothing, including suicide, separates us from the love of God (Romans 8:38-39). Therefore, we deplore the condemnation of people who complete suicide, and we consider unjust the stigma that so often falls on surviving family and friends.

We encourage pastors and faith communities to address this issue through preaching and teaching. We urge pastors and faith communities to provide pastoral care to those at risk, survivors, and their families, and to those families who have lost loved ones to suicide, seeking always to remove the oppressive stigma around suicide. The Church opposes assisted suicide and euthanasia.

In their history, the churches have often taught that suicide is the unforgivable sin. The desire to stop suicide has contradicted the call of Christ to compassion. Churches have denied funerals and memorial services to bereaved families. The names of victims have been banned from cemeteries. The Book of Resolutions 2004 supports the guidelines of the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention published by the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Summary

The suffering of the suicidal is private and inexpressible, leaving family members, friends, and colleagues to deal with an almost unfathomable kind of loss, as well as guilt. Suicide carries in its aftermath a level of confusion and devastation that is, for the most part, beyond description.

Kay Redfield Jamison

Suicide has stolen lives around the world and across the centuries. Meanings attributed to suicide and notions of what to do about it have varied with time and place, but suicide has continued to exact a relentless toll. In the United States, suicide is the eighth leading cause of death and contributes–through suicide attempts–to disability and suffering for hundreds of thousands of Americans each year. There are few who escape being touched by the tragedy of suicide in their lifetimes; those who lose someone close as a result of suicide experience an emotional trauma that may take leave, but never departs.

Suicide: Cost to the Nation

- Every 17 minutes another life is lost to suicide. Every day 86 Americans take their own life and over 1500 attempt suicide.
- Suicide is now the eighth leading cause of death in Americans.
- For every two victims of homicide in the U.S. there are three deaths from suicide.
- There are now twice as many deaths due to suicide than due to HIV/AIDS.
- Between 1952 and 1995, the incidence of suicide among adolescents and young adults nearly tripled.
- In the month prior to their suicide, 75% of elderly persons had visited a physician.
- Over half of all suicides occur in adult men, aged 25-65.
- Many who make suicide attempts never seek professional care immediately after the attempt.
- Males are four times more likely to die from suicide than are females.
- More teenagers and young adults die from suicide than from cancer, heart disease, AIDS, birth defects, stroke, pneumonia and influenza, and chronic lung disease, **combined**.
- Suicide takes the lives of more than 30,000 Americans every year.

Only recently have the knowledge and tools become available to approach suicide as a preventable problem with realistic opportunities to save many lives. The *National Strategy for Suicide Prevention: Goals and Objectives for Action* (NSSP or *National Strategy*) is designed to be a catalyst for social change, with the power to transform attitudes, policies, and services. It reflects a comprehensive and integrated approach to reducing the loss and suffering from suicide and suicidal behaviors in the United States. The effective implementation of the *National Strategy* will play a critical role in reaching the suicide prevention goals outlined in the Nation's public health agenda, *Healthy People 2010*. Representing the combined work of advocates, clinicians, researchers and survivors, the *National Strategy* lays out a framework for action and guides development of an array of services and programs yet to be set in motion. It strives to promote and provide direction to efforts to modify the social infrastructure in ways that will affect the most basic attitudes about suicide and that will also change judicial, educational, social service, and health care systems. The NSSP is highly ambitious because the devastation wrought by suicide demands the strongest possible response.

Because suicide is such a serious public health problem, the *National Strategy* proposes public health methods to address it. The public health approach to suicide prevention represents a rational and organized way to marshal prevention efforts and ensure that they are effective. Only within the last few decades has a public health approach to suicide prevention emerged with good understanding of the biological and psychosocial factors that contribute to suicidal behaviors. Its five basic steps are to clearly define the problem; identify risk and protective factors; develop and test interventions; implement interventions; and evaluate effectiveness.

As conceived, the *National Strategy* requires a variety of organizations and individuals to become involved in suicide prevention and emphasizes coordination of resources and

culturally appropriate services at all levels of government–Federal, State, tribal and community–and with the private sector. The NSSP represents the first attempt in the United States to prevent suicide through such a coordinated approach.

The *Goals and Objectives for Action* articulates a set of 11 goals and 68 objectives, and provides a blueprint for action. The next step for the *National Strategy* will be to prepare a detailed plan that includes specific activities corresponding to each of the 68 objectives.

Aims of the *National Strategy*

- Prevent premature deaths due to suicide across the life span
- Reduce the rates of other suicidal behaviors
- Reduce the harmful after-effects associated with suicidal behaviors and the traumatic impact of suicide on family and friends
- Promote opportunities and settings to enhance resiliency, resourcefulness, respect, and interconnectedness for individuals, families, and communities

***Goal 1*: Promote Awareness that Suicide is a Public Health Problem that is Preventable**

In a democratic society, the stronger and broader the support for a public health initiative, the greater its chance for success. If the general public understands that suicide and suicidal behaviors can be prevented, and people are made aware of the roles individuals and groups can play in prevention, the suicide rate can be reduced.

The objectives established for this goal are focused on increasing the degree of cooperation and collaboration between and among public and private entities that have made a commitment to public awareness of suicide and suicide prevention. They include:

- Developing public education campaigns
- Sponsoring national conferences on suicide and suicide prevention
- Organizing special-issue forums, and
- Disseminating information through the Internet.

***Goal 2*: Develop Broad-based Support for Suicide Prevention**

Because there are many paths to suicide, prevention must address psychological, biological, and social factors if it is to be effective. Collaboration across a broad spectrum of agencies, institutions, and groups–from schools to faith-based organizations to health care associations–is a way to ensure that prevention efforts are comprehensive. Such collaboration can also generate greater and more effective attention to suicide prevention than can these groups working alone. Public/private partnerships that evolve from collaboration are able to blend resources and build upon each group's strengths. Broad-based support for suicide prevention may also lead to additional funding, through governmental programs as well as private philanthropy, and to the incorporation of

suicide prevention activities into the mission of organizations that have not previously addressed it.

The objectives established for this goal are focused on developing collective leadership and on increasing the number of groups working to prevent suicide. They will help ensure that suicide prevention is better understood and that organizational support exists for implementing prevention activities. The objectives include:

- Organizing a Federal interagency committee to improve coordination and to ensure implementation of the *National Strategy*
- Establishing public/private partnerships dedicated to implementing the *National Strategy*
- Increasing the number of professional, volunteer, and other groups that integrate suicide prevention activities into their ongoing activities, and
- Increasing the number of faith communities that adopt policies designed to prevent suicide.

Goal 3: Develop and Implement Strategies to Reduce the Stigma Associated with Being a Consumer of Mental Health, Substance Abuse, and Suicide Prevention Services

Suicide is closely linked to mental illness and to substance abuse, and effective treatments exist for both. However, the stigma of mental illness and substance abuse prevents many persons from seeking assistance; they fear prejudice and discrimination. The stigma of suicide itself–the view that suicide is shameful and/or sinful--is also a barrier to treatment for persons who have suicidal thoughts or who have attempted suicide. Family members of suicide attempters often hide the behavior from friends and relatives, and those who have survived the suicide of a loved one suffer not only the grief of loss but often the added pain stemming from stigma.

Historically, the stigma associated with mental illness, substance abuse, and suicide has contributed to inadequate funding for preventive services and to low insurance reimbursements for treatments. It has also resulted in the establishment of separate systems for physical health and mental health care. One consequence is that preventive services and treatment for mental illness and substance abuse are much less available than for other health problems. Moreover, this separation has led to bureaucratic and institutional barriers between the two systems that complicate the provision of services and further impede access to care. Destigmatizing mental illness and substance use disorders could increase access to treatment by reducing financial barriers, integrating care, and increasing the willingness of individuals to seek treatment.

The objectives established for this goal are designed to create the conditions that enable persons in need of mental health and substance abuse services to receive them. They include:

- Increasing the number of suicidal persons with underlying mental disorders who receive appropriate mental health treatment, and
- Transforming public attitudes to view mental and substance use disorders as real illnesses, equal to physical illness, that respond to specific treatments and to view persons who obtain treatment as pursuing basic health care.

Goal 4: Develop and Implement Suicide Prevention Programs

Research has shown that many suicides are preventable; however, effective suicide prevention programs require commitment and resources. The public health approach provides a framework for developing preventive interventions. Programs may be specific to one particular organization, such as a university or a community health center, or they may encompass an entire State. While other goals in the NSSP address interventions to prevent suicide, a special emphasis of this goal is that of ensuring a range of interventions that in concert represent a comprehensive and coordinated program.

The objectives established for this goal are designed to foster planning and program development work and to ensure the integration of suicide prevention into organizations and agencies that have access to groups of individuals for other purposes. The objectives also address the need for systematic planning at both the State and local levels, the need for technical assistance in the development of suicide prevention programs, and the need for ongoing evaluation. Objectives include:

- Increasing the proportion of States with comprehensive suicide prevention plans
- Increasing the number of evidence-based suicide prevention programs in schools, colleges and universities, work sites, correctional institutions, aging programs, and family, youth, and community service programs, and
- Developing technical support centers to build the capacity across the States to implement and evaluate suicide prevention programs.

Goal 5: Promote Efforts to Reduce Access to Lethal Means and Methods of Self-Harm

Evidence from many countries and cultures shows that limiting access to lethal means of self-harm may be an effective strategy to prevent self-destructive behaviors. Often referred to as "means restriction," this approach is based on the belief that a small but significant minority of suicidal acts are, in fact, impulsive and of the moment; they result from a combination of psychological pain or despair coupled with the easy availability of the means by which to inflict self-injury. Thus, a self-destructive act may be prevented by limiting the individual's access to the means of self-harm. Evidence suggests that there may be a limited time effect for decreasing self-destructive behaviors in susceptible and impulsive individuals when access to the means for self-harm is restricted. Controversy exists about how to accomplish this goal because restricting means can take many forms and signifies different things to different people. For some, means restriction may connote redesigning or altering the existing lethal means of self-harm currently available, while to others it means eliminating or limiting their availability.

The objectives established for this goal are designed to separate in time and space the suicidal impulse from access to lethal means of self-harm. They include:

- Educating health care providers and health and safety officials on the assessment of lethal means in the home and actions to reduce suicide risk
- Implementing a public information campaign designed to reduce accessibility of lethal means
- Improving firearm safety design, establishing safer methods for dispensing potentially lethal quantities of medications and seeking methods for reducing carbon monoxide poisoning from automobile exhaust systems, and
- Supporting the discovery of new technologies to prevent suicide.

Goal 6: Implement Training For Recognition of At-Risk Behavior and Delivery of Effective Treatment

Studies indicate that many health professionals are not adequately trained to provide proper assessment, treatment, and management of suicidal patients, nor do they know how to refer clients properly for specialized assessment and treatment. Despite the increased awareness of suicide as a major public health problem, gaps remain in training programs for health professionals and others who often come into contact with patients in need of these specialized assessment techniques and treatment approaches. In addition, many health professionals lack training in the recognition of risk factors often found in grieving family members of loved ones who have died by suicide (suicide survivors).

Key gatekeepers–people who regularly come into contact with individuals or families in distress– need training in order to be able to recognize factors that place individuals at risk for suicide, and to learn appropriate interventions. Key gatekeepers include teachers and school personnel, clergy, police officers, primary health care providers, mental health care providers, correctional personnel, and emergency health care personnel.

The objectives established for this goal are designed to ensure that health professionals and key community gatekeepers obtain the training that will help them prevent suicide. They include:

- Improving education for nurses, physician assistants, physicians, social workers, psychologists, and other counselors
- Providing training for clergy, teachers and other educational staff, correctional workers, and attorneys on how to identify and respond to persons at risk for suicide, and
- Providing educational programs for family members of persons at elevated risk.

Goal 7: Develop and Promote Effective Clinical and Professional Practices

One way to prevent suicide is to identify individuals at risk and to engage them in treatments that are effective in reducing the personal and situational factors associated with suicidal behaviors (e.g., depressed mood, hopelessness, helplessness, alcohol and

other drug abuse, among others). Another way to prevent suicide is to promote and support the presence of protective factors, such as learning skills in problem solving, conflict resolution, and nonviolent handling of disputes. By improving clinical practices in the assessment, management, and treatment for individuals at risk for suicide, the chances for preventing those individuals from acting on their despair and distress in self-destructive ways are greatly improved. Moreover, promoting the presence of protective factors for these individuals can contribute importantly to reducing their risk.

The objectives established for this goal are designed to heighten awareness of the presence or absence of risk and protective conditions associated with suicide, leading to better triage systems and better allocation of resources for those in need of specialized treatment. They include:

- Changing procedures and/or policies in certain settings, including hospital emergency departments, substance abuse treatment centers, specialty mental health treatment centers, and various institutional treatment settings, designed to assess suicide risk
- Incorporating suicide-risk screening in primary care
- Ensuring that individuals who typically provide services to suicide survivors have been trained to understand and respond appropriately to their unique needs (e.g., emergency medical technicians, firefighters, police, funeral directors)
- Increasing the numbers of persons with mood disorders who receive and maintain treatment
- Ensuring that persons treated for trauma, sexual assault, or physical abuse in emergency departments receive mental health services
- Fostering the education of family members and significant others of persons receiving care for the treatment of mental health and substance abuse disorders with risk of suicide.

Goal 8: Improve Access to and Community Linkages with Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

The elimination of health disparities and the improvement of the quality of life for all Americans are central goals of Healthy People 2010. Some of these health disparities are attributable to differences of gender, race or ethnicity, education, income, disability, stigma, geographic location, or sexual orientation. Many of these factors place individuals at increased risk for suicidal behaviors.

Barriers to equal access and affordability of health care may be influenced by financial, structural, and personal factors. Financial barriers include not having enough health insurance or not having the financial capacity to pay for services outside a health plan or insurance program. Structural barriers include the lack of primary care providers, medical specialists or other health care professionals to meet special needs or the lack of health care facilities. Personal barriers include cultural or spiritual differences, language, not knowing when or how to seek care, or concerns about confidentiality or discrimination. Reducing disparities is a necessary step in ensuring that all Americans receive

appropriate physical health, mental health, and substance abuse services. One aspect of improving access is to better coordinate the services of a variety of community institutions. This will help ensure that at-risk populations receive the services they need, and that all community members receive regular preventive health services.

The objectives established for this goal are designed to enhance inter-organizational communication to facilitate the provision of health services to those in need of them. They include:

- Increasing the number of States that require health insurance plans to cover mental health and substance abuse care on par with coverage for physical health care
- Implementing utilization management guidelines for suicidal risk in managed care and insurance plans
- Integrating mental health and suicide prevention into health and social services outreach programs for at-risk populations
- Defining and implementing screening guidelines for schools, colleges, and correctional institutions, along with guidelines on linkages with service providers, and
- Implementing support programs for persons who have survived the suicide of someone close.

Goal 9: Improve Reporting and Portrayals of Suicidal Behavior, Mental Illness, and Substance Abuse in the Entertainment and News Media

The media–movies, television, radio, newspapers, and magazines–have a powerful impact on perceptions of reality and on behavior. Research over many years has found that media representations of suicide may increase suicide rates, especially among youth. "Cluster suicides" and "suicide contagion" have been documented, and studies have shown that both news reports and fictional accounts of suicide in movies and on television can lead to increases in suicide. It appears that imitation plays a role in certain individuals engaging in suicidal behavior.

On the other hand, it is widely acknowledged that the media can play a positive role in suicide prevention, even as they report on suicide or depict it and related issues in movies and on television. The way suicide is presented is particularly important. Changing media representation of suicidal behaviors is one of several strategies needed to reduce the suicide rate.

Media portrayals of mental illness and substance abuse may also affect the suicide rate. Negative views of these problems may lead individuals to deny they have a problem or be reluctant to seek treatment--and untreated mental illness and substance abuse are strongly correlated with suicide.

The objectives established for this goal are designed to foster consideration among media leaders of the impact of different styles of describing or otherwise depicting suicide and

suicidal behavior, mental illness, and substance abuse, and to encourage media representations of suicide that can help prevent rather than increase suicide. They include:

- Establishing a public/private group designed to promote the responsible representation of suicidal behaviors and mental illness on television and in movies
- Increasing the number of television programs, movies, and news reports that observe recommended guidelines in the depiction of suicide and mental illness, and
- Increasing the number of journalism schools that adequately address reporting of mental illness and suicide in their curricula.

Goal 10: Promote and Support Research on Suicide and Suicide Prevention

All suicides are highly complex. The volume of research on suicide and its risk factors has increased considerably in the past decade and has generated new questions about why individuals become suicidal or remain suicidal. The important contributions of underlying mental illness, substance use, and biological factors, as well as potential risk that comes from certain environmental influences are becoming clearer. Increasing the understanding of how individual and environmental risk and protective factors interact with each other to affect an individual's risk for suicidal behavior is the next challenge. This understanding can contribute to the limited but growing information about how modifying risk and protective factors change outcomes pertaining to suicidal behavior.

The objectives established for this goal are designed to support a wide range of research endeavors focused on the etiology, expression, and maintenance of suicidal behaviors across the lifespan. The enhanced understanding to be derived from this research will lead to better assessment tools, treatments, and preventive interventions. The objectives include:

- Developing a national suicide research agenda
- Increasing funds for suicide prevention research
- Evaluating preventive interventions, and
- Establishing a registry of interventions with demonstrated effectiveness for prevention of suicide or suicidal behavior.

Goal 11: Improve and Expand Surveillance Systems

Surveillance has been defined as the systematic and ongoing collection of data. Surveillance systems are key to health planning. They are used to track trends in rates, to identify new problems, to provide evidence to support activities and initiatives, to identify risk and protective factors, to target high risk populations for interventions, and to assess the impact of prevention efforts.

Data on suicide and suicidal behavior are needed at national, State and local levels. National data can be used to draw attention to the magnitude of the suicide problem and

to examine differences in rates among groups (e.g., ethnic groups), locales (e.g., rural vs. urban) and whether suicidal individuals were cared for in certain settings (e.g., primary care, emergency departments). State and local data help establish local program priorities and are necessary for evaluating the impact of suicide prevention strategies.

The objectives established for this goal are designed to enhance the quality and quantity of data available on suicide and suicidal behaviors and ensure that the data are useful for prevention purposes. They include:

- Developing and implementing standardized protocols for death scene investigations
- Increasing the number of follow-back studies of suicides
- Increasing the number of hospitals that code for external cause of injuries
- Increasing the number of nationally representative surveys with questions on suicidal behavior
- Implementing a national violent death reporting system that includes suicide
- Increasing the number of States that produce annual reports on suicide, and
- Supporting pilot projects to link and analyze information on self-destructive behavior from various, distinct data systems.

Looking Ahead

The *National Strategy for Suicide Prevention* creates a framework for suicide prevention for the Nation. It is designed to encourage and empower groups and individuals to work together. The stronger and broader the support and collaboration on suicide prevention, the greater the chance for the success of this public health initiative. Suicide and suicidal behaviors can be reduced as the general public gains more understanding about the extent to which suicide is a problem, about the ways in which it can be prevented, and about the roles individuals and groups can play in prevention efforts.

The *National Strategy* is comprehensive and sufficiently broad so that individuals and groups can select those objectives and activities that best correspond to their responsibilities and resources. The plan's objectives suggest a number of roles for different groups. Individuals from a variety of occupations need to be involved in implementing the plan, such as health care professionals, police, attorneys, educators, and clergy. Institutions such as community groups, faith-based organizations, and schools all have a necessary part to play. Sites for suicide prevention work include jails, emergency departments and the workplace. Survivors, consumers and the media need to be partners as well, and governments at the Federal, State, and local levels are key in providing funding for public health and safety issues.

Ideally, the *National Strategy* will motivate and illuminate. It can serve as a model and be adopted or modified by States, communities, and tribes as they develop their own, local suicide prevention plans. The NSSP articulates the framework for national efforts and provides legitimacy for local groups to make suicide prevention a high priority for action.

The *National Strategy* encompasses the development, promotion and support of programs that will be implemented in communities across the country designed to achieve significant, measurable, and sustainable reductions in suicide and suicidal behaviors. This requires a major investment in public health action.

Now is the time for making great strides in suicide prevention. Implementing the *National Strategy for Suicide Prevention* provides the means to realize success in reducing the toll from this important public health problem. Sustaining action on behalf of all Americans will depend on effective public and private collaboration–because suicide prevention is truly everyone's business.

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The Social Community and Insuring Domestic Tranquility

After my study of the Social Principles, I have put together the following set of my own social principles.

Since God has created each person, each person has the right to life, the right to choose freely the course their lives will take, and the right to pursue their view of what makes for a reasonably happy human life. The baby-boom generation, in particular, has encouraged society to reflect upon the need for respect and toleration in social relationships. A society that values liberty requires its citizens to respect diverse expressions of that liberty by individuals and social groups. The intellectual basis for this respect is the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, the Bill of Rights, the French Declaration of the Rights of Man, the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the European Convention on Human Rights. At its basic level, every person ought to have equal access to the social benefits offered by society: housing, education, communication, employment, medical care, the law, and protection of their person and property.

Hatred or violence against any group of persons is a failure to show respect to those whom God has made.

Personal racism is degrading attitudes towards groups of person solely because they are part of that group.

Institutional racism favors one group of persons over another, solely because of membership in that group.

Religious toleration is important for political authorities to show to each religion and for religious people to show to each other. Such toleration does not extend, however, to religious groups that justify violence against America. Such toleration does not extend to religious practices that abuse children or women.

Part of honoring what God has made shows itself in respect offered to the diversity of ethnic groups within society. In addition, such appreciation must lead to an appreciation to the deeper unity we have as human beings made in the image of God.

Persecution of racial groups is a failure to respect the ways God may be at work.

Adults owe to children proper education, food, clothing, shelter, health care, and emotional well-being. Children deserve protection from exploitation, physical violence, and sexual abuse.

Society owes respect to its young adults.

Society owes the aging respect, showing itself in proper retirement and health programs.

Society owes respect to women, showing itself in equal opportunity and access to jobs and other decision-making opportunities.

Society owes the disabled, often the weakest, respect as children of God and the gifts they offer to church and community.

Society owes respect to those of same gender orientation.

Proper means of control of population increases will enhance the quality of human life.

Abuse of alcohol and other drugs destroys the fabric of society.

Abuse of tobacco harms personal and public health.

Any medical experimentation on human beings requires their full, rational, and uncoerced consent.

Genetic technology can enhance the quality of human life. Yet, we must be careful in how we apply this technology to cloning and germ-line therapy in the sperm, egg, or early fertilization.
Respect for all life on the farm whether with the resident family farm or the factory farm, is an important part of the respect society owes to those who grow the food necessary for sustaining human life. All farming needs to carry out its work with the health of the totality of the ecosystem in mind.
The development of urban and suburban life needs to have in mind the quality of the human lives involved.
Churches and all those engaged in moral reflection have the social responsibility of encouraging the entertainment industry to promote values that enhance human life, rather than degrade it through its depiction of permissive lifestyles and violence. Parents need to monitor the use of entertainment, including the Internet, by their children.
Churches and society need to value those who live with HIV and AIDS. They need to educate people to avoid its spread.
Health care is not a right. The education of citizens regarding health styles of life will enhance the way in which citizens participate in society. Christianity itself emphasizes that the body is the temple of Holy Spirit. As such, human beings are to respect their bodies. Society itself, in extending respect to individuals, must also respect their bodies.
Any health care reform proposal must allow all Americans to choose their own doctor, hospital, and health plan. Health Savings Accounts are the only health plan that allows free choice of doctors and hospitals while providing incentives to reduce health care spending. Small employers should be allowed to join together across state lines and have the same flexibility that large employers enjoy. American families should be allowed to buy health insurance that meets their health care needs and should be allowed to buy insurance from other states. Thirty-three states have high-risk pools that provide health insurance to people who are sick and cannot get health insurance. This population represents a small portion of the country, but they should not be left out of America's health care system because they are sick.
Government and citizens ought to encourage people to donate their organs of their bodies for the enhancement of the lives of others.

The sense in which free societies are the best social world (home) for human beings

I want to focus the attention of the reader of this essay upon the sense in which a free society, one rooted in liberal democracy, is a proper and moral home for human beings. Such a home, created by human beings, is not perfect. As such, government has a moral responsibility to remove the oppressive practices that one citizen perpetrates upon another, such as in laws enforcing racism and sexism, or in laws favoring one religion over another. Free societies must also deal with the abuse of freedom, as often expressed

in sloth and lust through the entertainment industry, or with the use of products that may have long-term health effects (drugs and tobacco). It must also deal with the fears many citizens regarding their health and the safety of the food supply.

> Psalm 133:1-3
> How very good and pleasant it is
> when kindred live together in unity!
> It is like the precious oil on the head,
> running down upon the beard,
> on the beard of Aaron,
> running down over the collar of his robes.
> It is like the dew of Hermon,
> which falls on the mountains of Zion.
> For there the LORD ordained his blessing,
> life forevermore.

The psalmist, writing sometime before the Assyrians carted off the northern kingdom of Israel into captivity, expresses delight, and even surprise, when brothers and sisters "live together in unity." In at least two well-known stories, that of Abraham and Lot and that of Jacob and Esau, we can see how unfortunate it was that brothers separated. The bonds that held family and clan together were strong. A certain amount of shame fell upon family members who could not get along.

The bonds holding our society together is nothing like that of ancient clans or tribes. The bonds are nothing like the strong bonds of Medieval Europe. Our tendency toward asserting our rights can go toward splintering our society apart into tiny fragments. Further, technology has brought greater diversity to communities that, in the past, had a narrow religious or racial diversity. It was fine to talk about diversity from a distance. Now, we have to deal with it on a far more personal level. It can become increasingly difficult to see our underlying unity in the midst of diversity.

In a free society, the bonds that hold us together involve qualities that people must learn in the course of their lives. The primary quality such citizens need to learn is that of respect for the value, worth, and dignity of each individual and group in society. I grant that some people and groups strain the limits of our tolerance toward them. Clearly, such limits exist. We do not tolerate people who want to kill us.

The danger a free society faces is the degree to which people will not learn to respect others. Norman Rockwell painted a picture that represented the “freedom of speech” that the first amendment to the Constitution guarantees. In it, he pictures several persons sitting down, looking respectfully at another person from among them standing up and speaking. Some of those listening disagree with what their fellow citizen is saying. However, they listen respectfully to what the man had to say. Sadly, many people have lost the ability to listen respectfully to those with whom they disagree. Some ideas that our fellow citizens express may anger us. We can still respond to them respectfully and peacefully. Basic courtesy, politeness, and civility will carry us a long way. Who knows, the person who angers us today may be one that, if we have an open mind and heart, teaches us something we need to learn tomorrow.

Society in a liberal democracy consists of a variety of loosely connected individuals and groups. The connections that hold such a society together are, from a certain perspective, weak and subtle. The primary values are liberty and respect for human rights. Citizens in liberal democracies take human rights as an ideal for granted. In reality, the creation of human rights is one of the more amazing forms of status-function. Status-functions fall into certain broad categories. Yet, such a norm and goal requires citizens also to value the variety of ways people and groups will express their liberty.

People follow a trade, form families, belong to a territory and community, have a common language, educate their children, teach morality, form religious communities, establish a legal system, and involve themselves in political life. The bonds that hold the complexity of modern society are weaker than the bonds that hold a clan or tribe together. They are quite different from that bonds that hold a totalitarian society together, a bond that government coerces upon society. The weak social bonds are actually the strength of liberal democracy. They are a form of background music that holds the complex, chaotic, and competitive forces of a free society. It requires some degree of reflection to identify some of the subtle communion of individuals and groups that hold together a society that values liberty.

Among the difficulties in understanding any social world is that the social world is one that human beings construct, while at the same time, the social world forms those who participate in it. We internalize what others have created. We can make the mistake of assuming that what is, is the way things must be. Yet, one can see the importance of constructing a social world in the founding of the United States, as well as the dramatic changes that occurred during the depression and World War II. In the history of a liberal democracy, one can see the importance of participation in it, for that participation can issue forth in immense changes.

Liberal democracy embodies various contradictions that it resolves within its social world. The ideals always exceed the reality. Thus, the maturing of modern society has meant putting aside past injustices that failed to respect citizens. While envisioning a world that respects individual rights, in its history, liberal democracy has had to face its racism, its colonialism, its sexism, its abuse of the environment, its abuse of its workers,

its intolerance of religious minorities, its use of technology for inappropriate ends, and the tendency of its participants to foster qualities like greed, envy, and lust. This social world does not have a utopian vision of either its individuals or its life together. Liberal democracy assumes the imperfection of its citizens and of its institutions. As such, it remains open to future possibilities in ways that other societies are not. To live in a society where we can pursue our considered conception of the best human life we can lead is indeed a privilege. Few people on the earth have this privilege. When we take it for granted, we do an injustice to the genius quality of liberal democracy.

The social world valuing liberty is logically untidy and flexible and an ambiguous compromise. We need less messianic fervor and more skepticism that is enlightened, more toleration of idiosyncrasies, and more room for personal taste and belief. We need less mechanical and fanatical application of general principles and a more cautious and less arrogant self-confident application of accepted, scientifically tested general solutions to unexamined individual cases. We need a loose texture and toleration of a minimum of inefficiency, indulgence in idle talk and curiosity, and aimless pursuit of this or that without authorization. Conspicuous waste of time may allow more spontaneous, individual variation, and will always be worth more than the neatest and delicately fashioned imposed pattern. The kinds of problems that this or that system of social organization solves are not the only central questions of human life. We may deal with injustice, poverty, or war through reform or revolution. However, we do not live only by fighting evils. We live through positive goals, individual and collective, a vast variety of them, seldom predictable, and at times incompatible. Just as our experience of the world presents a process of coming to be at home that never ends, even in a world that appears

ever stranger because we have changed it so much, so too a reflective account of such a culture is an unending process.

Liberal democracy envisions a variety of social goods that the free interaction of individuals distributes throughout the society in such a way that absolute power exists nowhere. No individual or small group of persons control life in a culture organized around modern principles. This means that power distributes itself over these spheres of free exchange between individuals and groups without concept of deserving it in other spheres, and based upon basic needs of persons. Individuals and groups will both cooperate with each other to accomplish shared goals, as well as compete with each other. Liberal democracy establishes a weak view of the political state. In liberal democracy, no single sphere of influence becomes dominant throughout the culture - not even money.

Liberal democracy distributes power over several spheres of social life. The distribution of power toward individuals, families, free association in civil society (including between employer and employee and between producer and consumer), and the distribution of political power, suggest that liberal democracy does not have a center of power. Individuals, corporations, religions, and political parties, not even the State, become the hub of a wheel or the center around which society revolves. Liberal democracy creates a social order that exists more like a dance with moves that have reckless abandonment to it, while at the same time possessing subtle dimensions of order. The institutions of liberal democracy do not exist by means of force. They exist through an incredibly complex means of inter-connections that, with no one managing them, works together for the improvement of human life together. This is why an ideological

critique of liberal democracy cannot deal with liberal democracy as citizens actually experience it. Ideology proposes a static critique. One could propose such a critique of feudal society, or military democracy, communism or fascism. Such systems are static because of their need for force to impose the system upon citizens. This encourages a rigid social system and guarded access to power.

Liberal democracy replaces eternity with hope for the contingent future. It takes time and finitude seriously. The meaning of human life and societies is a function of how *human* history turns out, rather than its relation to something a-historical. The way to think about the significance of the *human* adventure is to look forward rather than upward, contrasting a possible human future with the *human* past and present. It makes *human* significance and awe temporal.

Civil society is a complex web of intermediate institutions, such as businesses, voluntary associations, educational institutions, clubs, unions, media, charities, and churches. The civil society is a separate realm of human activity that is distinct from the political sphere. A thriving civil society depends on the habits, customs, and ethics of a people. The civil sphere is the arena of contractual and civil relations within which people can pursue their private and association ends. It provides an arena within which people provide one another with objective recognition of their individual talents, skills, and achievements, their determinate position in society, and their general status as members of society. Of course, rights based individualism has its challenges. This emphasis can lead to the perception that nothing we do individually ought to matter to society. America pays a high price for its individuality, noting that one percept of its

population is in prison, pays more for police protection than other democracy, and has more lawyers per person than any other nation.

Modern society thrives when it allows the full participation of every citizen. Consequently, excluding participation of whole groups is counter to the health and liveliness of a modern society. More importantly, however, it represents a severe break with its moral ideals. Exclusion of groups creates an alienating situation for those groups that causes an internal relational tension within the individuals of those groups, within the excluded group, and between the group and society. Exclusion of women, of ethnic minorities, of religious minorities, of racial minorities, runs counter to the ideal of every member of society actualizing their worth and dignity through participation in society. This participation allows individuals to experience their social world as a home. Democracy is a means for safeguarding internal peace and individual freedom. We cannot reconcile the supremacy of a single purpose for the whole of society on the one hand with the freedom of the individual on the other. Truth becomes the casualty.

The political state within liberal democracy is a weak organization in that it respects the individual rights of its citizens. Individual rights, the worth and dignity of each individual, forms a limit to legitimate action by the state, regardless of what the individual believes philosophically or in religion or what they do ethically. The strong political states, such as military dictatorships, fascism, communism, and theocracy, have failed in satisfying fundamental human longing for the recognition of their uniqueness, dignity, and worth. Military dictatorships lack a plausible long-term basis for legitimacy.

The emphasis upon individuality in liberal democracy represents a unique moment in human history, elevating individuality to a specific social role that we will

need to accept if we are to fulfill the best plan of life within this social world. Our participation in social roles like domestic, civic and economic life, and political life, is often tacit. We behave in ways consistent with being a member of a family, a worker, or a citizen, even when we do not explicitly conceive ourselves in that way. The cost of rejecting such roles is high, but we have the freedom to do so. However, citizens can learn to be unique individuals on the one hand and members of society on the other. The two behaviors are compatible, even if tensions arise at times. In fact, one could argue that in a social world that values liberty, failure to participate is a rejection of one's fullest potential. We can conceive of ourselves as individuals and social members because both individual and civic life affirms that we have separate and particular interests, that we possess individual rights, and that we have the right of moral choice. Civic life is the proper sphere where we find this affirmation of the self. Further, we can conceive of self and social membership together. We are independent of our social roles; while at the same time conceive ourselves in terms of them.

One could argue that individuals in a free society discover their fullest potential as they identify with the roles of the uniqueness of their individuality, domestic life, civil and economic life, and citizenship. We become healthy individuals through dialogue with others. We accept responsibilities within family, civil life, and economic life. We accept responsibility for the formation of political life. In that sense, the path toward a reasonably happy life in free society is relatively simply. We reconcile ourselves to the fact that we can meaningful live our unique lives on the one hand by meaningfully participating in the various roles that society offers.

Civil society requires the ability of people to work together for common purposes in groups and organizations. Civil society requires the ability of people to associate with each other in both economic and non-economic ways. Knowledge and utilitarian skill are not enough to hold society together. This ability to associate depends on the degree to which communities share norms and values and are able to subordinate individual interests to those of larger groups. One aspect of such groups is the rational contract people make that it is their self-interest to cooperate with others. However, the most effective organizations are based on communities of shared ethical values.

Out of such shared values comes trust, a quality of civil life that has large and measurable economic value. Trust is the expectation that arises within a community of regular, honest, and cooperative behavior, based on commonly shared norms, on the part of other members of that community. Those norms can be about deep value questions like the nature of God or justice, but they also encompass secular norms like professional standards and codes of behavior. The ability of people to work together with a common purpose arises from the prevalence of trust in society or in certain parts of it. Cultural mechanisms like religion, tradition, or historical habit create and transmit this ability to work together in trustful ways. Although the way individuals inherit culture is not rational, culture may embed a high degree of rationality. As a habit, culture changes slowly.

The social world valuing liberty combines the principles of individuality and freedom with membership in a community. The form that individuality and freedom take includes freely forming families and marriages, freely and responsibly developing morality and conscience, pursuit of our economic goals, freely associating with people of

similar interests in society, and freely participating in the political order. In order for society to be a home, people must experience it as a place in which they can realize their potential as community members without abandoning or suppressing their individuality. The idea that liberal democracy and a social world valuing freedom is a home is not just a metaphor when it means that we have the possibility of achieving our highest potential as unique individuals and as members of this social world. This view unites the ancient concern for the values of public life and the concern of modernity for individual rights.

In what sense are we unique individuals, even when we members of a social world?

First, we are selves. To be a self is to conceive of oneself as independent of and distinct from one's social roles. We think of ourselves as having the capacity to abstract ourselves from any given social role that we perform. We enter a reflective relationship with the social world. We wonder about how we relate to that social world. We question and evaluate the social role in which we participate. We wonder if we want to play the role. We wonder if we accept the values and norms that are present in the role. We wonder whether we ought to play it. This suggests that one might choose not play in the accepted social roles. Whether one refuses or not, we distinguish ourselves by the fact that we have stood back and evaluated it. The role is external to us, to our "self." The social role does not define us. As selves, we grasp that we have this ability to step back from social roles.

Second, we are bearers of separate and particular interests that are separate from the interests of other people and the interests of the group, community, or social world. They are particular in that they are interests one has as the particular person one is. This

means that something may be good for one individual that would not be good for another individual or for the community. Such separate and particular interests can bring one into conflict with other individuals or with the community.

Third, we are possessors of individual rights that do not derive from one's status as the bearer of a particular social role or position in society. We have rights as persons in contrast to other individuals and in contrast to the community. These rights may conflict with other persons and with the community.

Fourth, we are subjects of conscience, as we become independent sources of moral assessment and evaluation. We have the capacity and right to assess courses of actions, social roles, and institutions based on our private, subjective judgment, even in defiance of accepted practice and custom. We make judgments about right and duty, asserting that we know what those are in given situations. Conscience can bring us into conflict with our community since it is always possible for the deliberation of our conscience to run counter to the demands of community.

Individuality understood in this way is a distinctive feature of the liberal democracies in the world.

Citizens of liberal democracy are distinctively and specifically members of that social world. They are members of a society organized around social institutions like the nuclear family, civic and economic life, and political institutions. They are part of a unique set of social arrangements that shape us. They explicitly and tacitly participate in the central institutions of the modern social world. They are born into this social world. They are born into this framework of institutional life. They will likely die in it. They gain perceptions of self through participation in this social framework.

From a Christian perspective, what I have written here is little more than an extended commentary on a statement of Jesus in Matthew 7:12, "In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets." I might also mention what Jesus said in Luke 10:27, "You shall love … your neighbor as yourself." Christians have a call from the one they follow to be good neighbors, bearing witness in word and deed to what Jesus has said here. Among the values taught in character programs around is that of respect, and what I have written is little more than exposition of that trait. People who want to become good neighbors will become acquainted and extend respect. From the standpoint of generational studies, I have offered little more than an exposition of baby boom values that they have fought hard to make part of the values of this country: respect for the environment, respect for the diversity of races, respect for the rights of women, respect for those of same-gender sexual orientation, and respect for religious minorities. Christians who want to become good neighbors will create a sense of community in the midst of unique customs that various groups practice. They will offer their witness to Christ in a way that also listens to what the other person has to say to them. They respect and recognize other people and those whose ways seem strange to them. They stop trying to make others like themselves. They become open to the uniqueness of this person, recognizing that God is in the one strange to them, just as much as God is in them.

The oppressive force of racism

One sign of alienation in America has been, and remains, racism. No one should minimize the influence racism has had on American society. The oppression of the Black person began in Africa, when opposing tribes captured them and sold them into slavery to

Muslims. The origin of the African slave trade in Islamic countries is not something about which we often read. Eventually, Europeans became involved in this slave trade. It continued in the devastating voyage across the Atlantic. It continued in the sale of human beings into the oppressive form of life represented by slavery. Because of the difference between North and South, the South became the primary manifestation of this oppressive form of life. Many preachers sought to raise the moral consciousness of the nation against this institution. Yet, the opposition of many other preachers who supported the institution remains a blot upon American church history. Although many who helped found the nation wanted to remove slavery, they made compromises in the constitution that led to several decades of public debate about the continuation of slavery. Finally, a devastating Civil War ended slavery. This act by the federal government took the bold step of defending individual liberty over the rights of individual states to limit a race of people from participating in the benefits of a free society. This war took more American lives than other war in its history. It devastated a whole generation. Although white persons instituted slavery, one always needs to remember that white persons, at great cost to themselves, ended slavery. One ought to note that only those who arose out of Western civilization have had the intellectual, political, moral, and economic courage to make slavery illegal. Slavery remains today in Africa, in Asia, and in Muslim countries.

Nevertheless, in America, racism continued in the form of segregation. It took World War II to make persons of different races realize that they could work side by side. The civil rights movement of the 1950's and through the 1960's was a union of black and white persons to appeal to the moral conscience of the nation. The victory of this pacifist movement showed the underlying decency and moral conviction of the nation. In other

words, the moral appeal of the oppressed would not work in a country that cared nothing for morality. However, tapping into the moral conscience of the nation by declaring that the promise of liberty and justice for all was not a reality for these persons summoned the nation to practice its highest and best ideals. The moral appeal finally led to legislation that steadily removed the legal embodiment of racism. Although much work remains to remove racist attitudes, as a nation we can celebrate that the work since the 1950's has resulted in a nation far more appreciative of the ethnic and racial diversity of the country.

The civil rights movement of the 1950's and early 1960's is a classic example of the capacity of American society to renew itself. It was a movement focused on changing national character even more than on changing individual laws. Discriminatory laws needed to be changed, of course. More than that, the way black and white people related to one another needed to be changed. Martin Luther King Jr. resisted pressure to fall back upon victimization as the defining experience of the American black or to use it to justify or explain deviant behavior. "We must not let the fact that we are the victims of injustice lull us into abrogating respect for our own lives," he said. "Nothing is so much needed as a secure family life for a people to pull themselves out of poverty." He was influenced by Reinhold Niebuhr, who warned against "moral conceit" and against campaigns based on moral indignation. The alternative was what Gandhi had called "soul force," a nonviolence not merely of tactics but of a spirit of goodwill. The key in such a methodology is the affirmation of the humanity of both victim and oppressor. King's embrace of nonviolence and passive resistance, as well as the emphasis on moral restraint and forgiveness, created an irresistible momentum for the civil rights movement. In August of 1963, he delivered his most famous speech in Washington, D. C. He

envisioned the children of former slaves sitting at the table of fellowship with the children of former slave owners. He envisioned a time when Mississippi would be changed from injustice and oppression to freedom and justice. He then 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. I have a dream today! I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of interposition and nullification, one day, right there in Alabama, little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers. I have a dream today!

What is needed is equality of opportunity. Unfortunately, we have become too conscious of race again. It is time to stop playing the role of victim of society. Under present civil rights legislation, 70 percent of the American population officially qualifies for victim status, with rights to sue. No business can afford an expensive court battle. Discrimination is the great alibi for failure. The problem with the new Civil Rights bill is not that it is a quota bill, but that it is blackmail. Rather, it is time to apply oneself through hard work, discipline, and faith, so that one can advance economically. One cannot achieve these values through political means. They will be accomplished on a broad scale as black leaders shift their focus from government to business, values, and church. Politics was a necessary avenue of activity as long as there were legal barriers to black advancement. Now that the country has dealt with them, it is time to get on with the real task of advancing through personal discipline, hard work, and faith. Racism has become the excuse of choice for all forms of misbehavior. Sadly, such focus on values and academic achievement the Left and certain modern civil rights circles often ridicule an emphasis upon personal discipline as a form of "acting white." Their acceptance might mean assimilation into the American melting pot. However, the rejection of such shared history and values will make genuine advances difficult, if not impossible. Part of

that shared history is suffering. White history in America involves suffering. Those of us who have German descent have ancestors who experienced persecution during WWII. Most of our ancestors came to the USA as the result of persecution in Europe. We all know suffering in our history.

I would like to suggest a biblical image. The enslavement of African Americans in the United States is similar to the experience of the tribes of Israel in Egypt. The Civil War would then resemble the passing of the Israelites through the Red Sea. The rather quick embodiment of racism in laws of segregation would be the wandering in the wilderness. The support many African Americans gave in WWII as soldiers, and the resulting movement regarding Civil Rights, would be on a parallel with the Promised Land. In other words, the time has come for African-Americans to experience America as their home.

No one could grow up in America without experiencing the influence of racism. As a white person growing up in the 1960's in Austin, Minnesota, I had no experience with ethnic minorities. Yet, the racism of my father was clear. Usually when he was drunk, he related stories of his experience of "niggers' in the Navy. He had no use for the black person. He often said that, if he knew he had a week to live, he would buy his own private arsenal of guns, go the inner city of Detroit or Chicago, and kill as many black persons as he could. I can honestly say, however, that his argument never made sense to me. I could not understand why I should treat someone different, simply because the color of his or her skin was different from mine. He told me that once I went into the world and saw what "they" were like, I would change my mind. My own experience has been that people of differing racial and ethnic background from mine have enriched my

life and experience. I am a better person because of the interaction. In other words, just because my father was a racist does not mean that I have to live with his prejudice in me. I have the capacity to evaluate this prejudice and reject it. My point, of course, is that this capacity is not unique to me. No one has to internalize the prejudice with which they may have grown up.

The gap between the way of thinking of white America and black America is vast. While black Americans now vote as a block with the Democrat Party, white Americans divide their votes between the two parties. The differences in their response to the O. J. Simpson verdict were vast, symbolizing the difference in the experience of the two communities of the American judicial system and their experience with police. The difference in perspective of the use of the Willie Horton ad by George H. W. Bush was large. Most black Americans took it as an attack on the black community, while most white Americans focused upon the inability of the legal system to keep a chronically violent person behind bars, recognizing that his victims were black people. While conservatives celebrated the appointments of people like Clarence Thomas, Condelesa Rice, and Colin Powell, black America took a decidedly neutral or negative stance.

Sadly, much of the Left has turned to justifying violence by the black community as a form of getting the attention of people in power. Further, much of the Left believes that America has simply accepted the evil of racism. The problem I have with this analysis is that the Civil War in the middle 1800's, the struggle for Civil Rights in the 1950's and 1960's, and the development of vast government social programs shows that Americans have not ignored this problem.

I want to say some things now that some conservatives will not like. However, we need to be quite honest about the racial oppression that is part of the American story. I will emphasize along with any conservative the freedom that the first settlers sought as the fled European oppression because of religion. Further, the revolutionaries that began America as a nation in the mid to late 1700's were people of ideas and vision for a society grounded in freedom. This vision led them to a Declaration of Independence, a Constitution, and a Bill of Rights, that still inspires freedom-loving people over the world. These documents led them to protect the rights of individuals from the tendency of government to oppress its citizens. Sadly, however, these founders had their sins of prejudice as well. For the first century of the existence of this country, its institutions oppressed the Native American almost to the point of extinction, an act we now call genocide. I grant that Native American tribes often chose the losing side in war, siding with the British, and then the French, against the colonialists who settled along the coast. During the same period, the nation could not peacefully rid itself of the insidious embodiment of racism known as slavery. Again, many founders of the country saw the contradiction of arguing for their liberty while denying it to slaves. Even after the Civil War, the country allowed for another century the re-institution of racism in laws of segregation. My argument with the Right is that it often omits the dark side of the American experience. My argument with the Left is that it often omits the positive side of the story. If America is to move forward to an improved experience of race, it will need to find a way to tell both stories. A nation that tries to cut itself from the potentially positive resources of its tradition and history will cut itself off from the moral sources it needs to build a better future.

Giving one's life for one's country is the most radical expression of patriotism one can make. People of color constitute a high percentage of the military. People of color abandon their countries in order to come to the United States. Even when America has not loved them appropriately, they have loved America.

What the country needs is a steady erosion of the moral foundations that support racism. I do fear that the focus upon political and legal issues will only divide this nation further, and potentially lead to separate, multi-cultural nations within one nation. We ought to become, once again, one nation, united by our freedom, respect for human dignity, and the pursuit of our dreams. We need to become excited about having others recognize us as persons, and not as part of a race. In particular, we need to create the conditions within which all races can become friends. As long as we focus upon alienation and resentment of the past and present, reconciliation can never take place.

Hatred is a diminishing emotion. White people needed liberation from the bondage in which their racist thinking kept them. Hatred makes us inmates in the prisons of our souls. Any hatred of people because of their race, whether from black, white, brown, yellow, and everyone in between, dehumanizes the other, creates as essential something that does not matter, and denies the basic unity that exists between all human beings. In this sense, racism and prejudice are not just the response of people in power. Such prejudice rots the soul of anyone who participates in it, whether they are in power or not. The things that unite races, simply because they are human, are far more important than the things that divide them. Any attempt to "understand" that hatred is a concession to it and trends toward excusing it.

Suffering is part of life. All of us have to overcome problems in order to survive. However, victim status binds us to our condition, for in it lays its power. For the victim, pain is not just part of life. The pain constitutes a definition of his or her life, a definition that is the fault of someone else. When many Americans claim that slavery gave black people a unique claim to suffering, they separated them from the common human experience of suffering. The result was to give their suffering a special status. However, that status depends upon remaining victims. This victim perspective denies the unity that human beings experience in suffering. We suffer as groups. We have our own private suffering. That is life. No matter what race or economic class, we suffer. An important part of life is to learn to overcome such problems. In claiming special privileges because of the institutional and social oppression represented in slavery, discrimination, or racism, we have denied to black Americans the only viable means to success in America. Further, we have taken a rather dim view of the common or average American. Do white Americans have the capacity to overcome the prejudice of their ancestors? To answer in the negative is to have a deterministic and fatalistic approach to human nature that most Americans do not share. In fact, a new future for America that removes racism as a factor depends upon the possibility of white Americans to engage black Americans in meaningful dialogue and work in a wide variety of ways. American society will not eliminate racism by encouraging the African-American community toward resentment against whites and dependence upon federal government action on their behalf in the form of preferring them to white people. In fact, such preferential programs assume that black Americans cannot make it on their own efforts. It seems that Black Americans ready to move forward. A Washington Post poll in the spring of 2001 asked respondents

whether minorities should receive preferences. Among Black Americans, 86 percent said hiring, promotions, and college admissions should have their basis strictly on merit and qualifications other than race and ethnicity.

In matters of law, government, and public policy, we need to insist on the total irrelevance of membership in a racial group. Equal opportunity to participate in society and in aid offered by any level of government is necessary. Though a racially blind society may be idealistic, it is an ideal worth pursuing.

I may be wrong, but I think some liberals will agree, privately, that they have not kept up with the changes in race relations in the United States. They know that their refusal to apply personal responsibility to Black America is another way for whites to view blacks as inferior, incapable of making in society without the help of white people. The endless need for liberalism to perpetuate the image of black people as victims of American society may be more the result of white condescension than white decency. The liberal hopes to redeem the racial shame that is American history by perpetuating this image. Shelby Steele, "Liberal Bias and the Zone of Decency," put it this way:

> That peculiar, post-sixties deferential liberalism has been more interested in redeeming moral authority of whites than in actually helping blacks.

He went on to say the following.

> They (liberals) keep us in this protest mode. We then think that our whole future depends on keeping whites feeling guilty and keeping them on the hook. The more we protest, the more dependent we become, the weaker we become. We're weaker today than we were in the nineteen-fifties.

All of this suggests a social program within the black community, led by black leaders. It would mean taking responsibility for their own communities. They should launch a campaign to promote marriage and family formation in the African-American

community. They should issue a moral plea to the community to stigmatize fathers who abandon their children and parents who have more children than they can afford. They should campaign for a tripling of police forces in inner-city areas to protect the vast majority of inhabitants who are law-abiding and who are the true victims of the predators among them.

The Left will often approach the matter of race as if American society is so racist that it has made no progress since the founding of the nation. It implies that white Americans today do not feel guilty enough for this heritage, have not felt enough sorrow, have not repented, and are blind to their hidden racism. I recall reading *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*, an account of the relations between the American government and the Native American in the 1800's. When I read the first half of the book, I found myself in tears over what my ancestors had done. I also felt quite helpless. After all, I could do nothing to stop that history of oppression and genocide. The point is that the burden of the past actions of white Americans, and the understandable feeling of alienation among black Americans, is not the place to stop. Churches have had multiple services of repentance and healing concerning racism. Although such services can lead to increased awareness and action toward removing racism from national life, how can I repent for what others have done? How can people today repent for the sins of their ancestors? To whom do black Americans go to extract punishment and justice? When I confront such obvious evil in the history of the nation in which I live, I can call for its death, I suppose. The sins of the country are so serious that America needs to die. I could also approach the sins of the nation as part of the serious sinfulness of humanity, forgive those who engaged in it, repent of any vestiges of these past sins that may still reside in my life, and

then act in ways that show respect to people as children of God, regardless of race or ethnic background. The Civil War to end slavery and the Civil Rights movement to end segregation were not a form of cheap grace in order to move toward a healthy culture. America went through each historical period with great cost to all.

By the way, most of us practice this type of response with at least one person all the time – ourselves. All of us have done things we regret, and if we are old enough, we have done things and thought things for which we deserve the harshest punishment. Yet, we continue to get up in the morning and live our lives. At some level, we have forgiven ourselves. The continuation of anger over the past is a serious source of the inability for healing grace to enter our lives. Although I have not had the experience in my ancestral past that the Native American and black American has, I do have the experience of forgiving someone who did not ask for it – my alcoholic father. I ask nothing more than that same exercise of grace and forgiveness to the sins of this nation. The point, I think, is that we have today in our hands. We have the capacity to have a future national experience in which racism is unthinkable. We can start moving that direction today.

The oppressive force of sexism

Christina Hoff Sommers, in *Who Destroyed Feminism?* identifies liberal feminism as asking for a fair playing field, equality of opportunity but not equality of outcome. This group of feminists do not want preferential treatment and downplays behavior differences between the sexes in order to emphasize their common humanity, especially that of rationality and independence. However, feminism is getting a bad name because of a radical, powerful minority of female academics, activists, and bureaucrats. They embrace the assumption that women's oppression is the most basic form of

oppression. Women are viewed as the first oppressed group, universally found, and hardest to eradicate. Their energies are focused on denouncing the evils perpetuated by men. They are suspicious of all heterosexual relationships by broadening concepts of date rape and sexual harassment to a point where men are afraid to make innocent overtures. They claim women are more relational than men and therefore superior. In doing so, they take a low view of rationality and science, thereby discrediting the qualities necessary to make it in today's world. They turn women into the eternal victim.

It is difficult to view this as anything other than a political agenda to discredit the nation once again. The name-calling along these lines has a chilling effect on a genuine discussion of issues. Feminist leaders are no longer seeking equal pay for equal work and an equal opportunity to get jobs. They want to change the fundamental relationship between the sexes, including family and marriage relationships. This group seems to be focused on two issues today. One is abortion rights. The other is lesbian rights. This is a far cry from the noble beginnings of the movement. They are willing to believe anything that serves the agenda of proving that America is a sexist society. The point is that American women are not as free as they think they are. Men work to keep women cowering and submissive. All institutions, in church and government, in family and school, support this subordination of women. They seem to be looking for just the right statistic that will prove the sexist nature of the system, the brutality of men, and so on. They believe that physical menace toward women is the norm in our society. The male dominated society of America, in this view, requires violence to maintain it.

A further example is use of gaps in salaries and economic opportunities by such leaders of the Feminist movement. The natural need for women is to bear children that

brought about civilization, the need for raising them and providing for them. In fact, this is one of the key mistakes made in comparing male and female success in the free market. Women often take time out for children. This reality is one that too many fail to consider, and which some want to alter radically. For many, statistics are used to prove discrimination against women and a backlash against the gains made by women. The use of statistics in the 1980's is a case in point. Far from being a decade of retreat, as Susan Faludi sought to support, it was a time of greater gain than in any other post war decade. Sylvia Nasar, in the New York Times, said that women earn of each dollar of men's wages to a record 72 cents. Younger women, who tended to have more education, were up to 80 cents, which was increase from 69 cents in 1980. For women with a college diploma, it is 73 cents, not the 59 cents often quoted. The remaining difference does not appear to be the result of discrimination. Rather, it is the result of a shorter workweek for women. In fact, when the gap is based on hourly wage earnings, it is considerably smaller. For single white workers between 20 and 44, females' hourly earnings were between 86 to 91 percent of males' hourly earnings. In addition, women on the average are not in the work place as long as men of the same age are. This is important in considering the glass ceiling. Men are more likely than women are to be willing to spend late hours and weekends to get into that income bracket.

In the public sector, where credentials often can be used for advancement, the glass ceiling does not exist. However, in the private sector, achievement is the basis for advancement. Steven Goldberg has shown that there never has existed a documented matriarchy. Feminist psychologists Eleanor Maccoby and Carol Jacklin state that 1) Males are more aggressive than females in all human societies for which evidence is

available. 2) The sex differences are found early in life, at a time when there is no evidence that differential socialization pressures have been brought to bear by adults to "shape" aggression differently in the two sexes. 3) Similar sex differences are found in man and sub-human primates. 4) Aggression is related to levels of sex hormones, and can be changed by experimental administrations of these hormones. However, feminists who acknowledge these realities do not make the next logical step, that the more aggressive sex will tend to win more competitions. Many believe that "soft" skills are becoming necessary. However, science and math and technology are becoming more, not less, important in the private sector.

The oppressive force of established religion – Religious tolerance and its limits

Human history is full of the alienation that religion brings to human society. Religion has often kept women from realizing their full potential as human beings. Religion has often treated with contempt those who differed from their beliefs, often resulting in war. Such experiences resulted in religious minorities to leave Europe and colonize America. In the creation of the United States of America, the founders made it clear that this country would be a place that would not establish one religion over another. The result was a secular government that recognized the importance of religion in the forming of the morality and culture, but that the government must not dictate such matters.

September 11, 2001 has introduced another issue. What are the limits of religious toleration? Islam has raised the issue in a way in which no other religion has done. For example, since the Koran allows husbands to beat wives, does this mean that American society needs to accept this behavior on their part? Muslims have their Sharia law, and

seek special accommodation for their beliefs, including ritual washing and praying at specified times during the day. Does a secular society accommodate these beliefs? When does Islam learn to accommodate itself to a secular society? Many Muslim neighbors have not caught the vision of freedom that our nation espouses. Growing numbers of Muslims residing in democratic countries do not share our views on women's rights, social justice, or racial tolerance. Politics and faith are inextricably connected in the mind of an Islamic radical. There is no comparison with the conservative Christian involvement in American politics. In Christianity, governments are charged with waging wars, while individuals are called to a lifestyle of personal peace and non-violence. Conversely, many Muslims have taken up the call to personal violence as an act of their faith. Therefore, suicide bombing, rioting, persecution of non-believers and other atrocities are all part of personal choices that radical Muslims make.

Part of religious toleration is to allow full and free persuasion between the various religions. Christianity did not learn this respect from within itself. Rather, the emerging culture of political and economic freedom is to which it accommodated itself. It saw value to itself to participated in such a society. As a result, its universal claims now became a matter of moral persuasion rather than political imposition. People have the freedom to choose which religion, if any, they will follow. Unfortunately, many Christian denominations have taken the value of respect for the views to the extreme of not evangelizing for their faith. In this case, Christians need to share boldly and respectfully their faith with their Muslim neighbors.

John Parrazzo, in *The Myths that Divide Us*, has stressed the embedded character of our beliefs in this way. It requires courage to cast aside the accumulated myths of a

lifetime to the wind. Our natural desire for simplicity and certitude causes us to defend the most flawed worldviews as if our lives depended upon them. Dead beliefs are difficult to bury. To bury them requires willingness to temporarily ender a world we do not recognize. My point is, countries within which a dominant belief system does not value freedom will have a difficult time making the transition to the respect for differing opinions that political and economic freedom requires. The dominant belief system will need to see a value to itself and to the country to start down this path. For Europe, the contradiction of Christians killing Christians in the name of the "Prince of Peace" was not lost on Christian communities. Europeans eventually got tired of killing each other. This weariness eventually led to Christians, especially Presbyterians and Anabaptists, to agitate for non-establishment of religion. Such respect for differing, deeply held religious held beliefs, brings a culture of respect for differing views in other areas of society.

The challenge faced by Islam is that if it will be part of a society free in religious beliefs, politics, and economics, present adherents will need to pave the way for future believers to put aside Sharia law imposed by the state, or even accommodated by the state.

My fear is that some people within American do not understand the threat America faces. America cannot negotiate with al Qaeda, the Wahabbi sect, and terrorist states. A reasonable estimate is that three to four percent of the 1.3 billion Muslims in the world are potential recruits, involving 39-52 million people.[2] Free societies have no common ground with such terrorists. Free societies can only destroy them. Free societies are in a fight for their survival. They could lose the war.

[2] Newt Gingrich, *Winning the Future*, p. 8.

Many in the media, many in the ACLU, many in political life, have taken steps toward suicide. They have aligned themselves with those who would destroy this country. Their belief in America as an oppressive force in the world, combined with the belief in multi-culturalism, has blinded them to a genuine enemy America faces. The rise of Muslim fundamentalism has generated another formidable opposition to the respect of the rights, worth, and dignity of individuals. As an ideological movement, it has similarity to fascism and Communism. Everything that the West fought for in the Enlightenment period, these people stand against. Long ago, the Middle East and Islam rejected any attempt to move toward Enlightenment. Today, they consider themselves purists in favor of the Islamic triumph over the world. The only morally wrong act is to reject the revolution. They revolution for which they long is Muslims all over the world to join them in an attack upon the West. The guilt of the world rests upon those who do not join their revolution. It will be up to the United States to accept its leadership in the world on behalf of liberty to deal with this challenge. Americans will need to fight for their own future, as well as the future of others.

I would suggest a few principles.

First, the military has crippled the original group around Bin Laden. Given the history of this group, the military has already defended America and Europe from what would have been far more attacks.

Second, if the experience of Europe is any indication, the United States will need to develop new legal procedures to deal with Islamic fundamentalist terrorism. Europe has many avenues open to surveillance and detaining suspected terrorists that America does not have. The military has already killed many terrorist leaders as part of their war.

However, it will not kill all of them. Europe has made legal adjustments with the same difficulty that the USA has had. Groups concerning with individual liberty are always nervous about granting to the police and government such powers. At the same time, some trust in our elected representative is important. One might even use the criminal procedures against organized crime as a pattern for dealing with terrorist networks. The advantage of this procedure is that, once in the legal system, the possibility for people to give up important information for the purpose of self-preservation is important.

Third, countries are already using procedures to dry up the money pipeline for these groups.

It is difficult to imagine an end to this war. However, in light of a passion for the possible, I want to suggest that it can. Long-term, the Bush administration is right to have a policy of democratization among the Arab countries. It will require changes within Islam that Christians and Jews cannot impose. It will require Arab governments who will have the courage to oppose their fundamentalist clerics in their attempts to educate, through television, the hatred of Jews and the USA.

I propose the possibility, recognizing the despair with which many people face this battle. When people willingly become homicide bombers, the possibility of defense appears remote. However, I recognize that the possibility for change is present, and that the change needs to occur within the Arab world and within Islam. Islam will need to have secular leaders strong enough to teach it that it can peacefully persuade people to its religion without desiring to impose Islamic law upon the culture, just as Christianity in Europe needed secular leaders to teach it this truth. It will take time and patience to accomplish this, for the masses of Muslims in the world is closer to fundamentalism than

they are to a "moderate" brand of Islam. Further, the religious texts of Islam do not lend themselves well to humanism and liberal democracy. Yet, Islam needs to learn the first rule of religion: do no harm. The masses need to learn that others in the world disagree with their religious beliefs, that it is all right for them to do so, and that intimidating people to silence their disagreement is not a good or godly thing to do. It needs to learn that it can make a positive contribution to the best human life without resorting to worldly force and dominance of a culture. It needs to learn to live with the ambiguities the liberty and respect for the worth and dignity of each individual bring.

One of the major issues facing liberal democracies is the production, modernization, and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. However, the problem is not so much their proliferation, though I agree that the fewer in the world the better. The problem is the kind of people who have them. If communist dictators and military dictators, or Islamic fundamentalists, possess such weapons, we have cause for concern. Nations that respect the worth and dignity of individuals may have them and still we do not fear their use to gain advantage. The way to peace is not the removal of weapons, for having once gained such knowledge, we cannot go back to ignorance. Rather, the spread of liberal democracy will place peaceful, tolerant, and pluralistic leaders in charge of those countries.

These matters raise question about the relationship between Jews, Muslims, and Christians in America.

The Muslims with whom I have spoken do not understand what they consider to be the pro-Israeli policy of the United States in the Middle East. To you, I hope what I have said so far has helped explain why American policy is the way it is. You may not

want to hear it, but you need to listen: the Arab governments need to become respectful of the worth, dignity, and rights of their own people. Islam needs to accept a role as a sub-culture within the Arab world. I hope you, as American Muslims, can help Islam get to that place in its history, and I hope you can do what you can steer Arab governments toward honoring liberty. I hope you will do so out of genuine compassion for your brothers and sisters.

Further, the Muslims with whom I have spoken have a legitimate concern about how America will treat them during this difficult time. I remind you that the government has required Muslims who have legally entered this country to register themselves and their families. If you have done nothing wrong, you have nothing to fear. Frankly, I hope that every visa that the government has granted will require some kind of continual renewal and registration. We live in a dangerous world. The genuine immigrants to this country do so because they value liberty and desire the best for themselves and their families. However, too many people, and too many are Muslim, want to destroy the liberties that you enjoy. You do not desire Islamic imposed in this culture or in any other country. I recognize that. However, I hope that you can cooperate with the government in this matter, and help your adopted country to defend itself against an enemy that may be within your communities.

Now, related to the matter of the subtle language of religion, I would like to direct your attention to the subtle language of ethical decisions, reasons, and behavior, within liberal democracies. Ethical reflections have certain pre-conditions for them to take place in our lives. We enter into relationships with others, we develop some level of politeness with them, and we love them, and hate (in weak sense) them. We work and play with

others. We learn to set aside some time to reflect upon our lives and the pattern of life we weave through our behavior and thinking. We develop some appreciation for aesthetics in our lives, embellishing life around us beyond what pure utility would require. Through parental instruction and other involvements, we become aware of custom and tradition within the subculture of which we are a part. None of this is ethical reflection in itself, but provides the fertile soil out of which ethical reflection arises. We begin reasoning about these matters, aware that even if we cannot come to the truth in these matters that is sufficient, we need to have good reasons for thinking and behaving the way we do. We recognize the need for us to live truthfully, even as we aware of how imperfect we really are. The desire toward the best plan of life includes some conception of what it means for us to lead the good life, and that desire says something good about us. We learn the need to discipline our feelings through self-control and courage. We learn discipline toward external goods through our involvement in productive work, generosity with the things we possess, being honorable in our dealings with others, and even in simplifying our lives so that we can enjoy the best things in life. We learn to discipline our relationships with others through accepting responsibility for our lives, tolerance toward others, dealing with others with fairness, speaking and living truthfully, preserving in relationships and work, loyalty to others, practicing appropriate forgiveness, expressing gratitude, practicing gentleness, and having faith. As we reflect upon such matters, we find a meaningful place in the social world in which we live. We develop a rational plan of life that has a healing effect upon our lives and the lives of those around us. We even learn to accept the inevitable experiences of good and bad fortune as part of a human life, dealing

with the treasures and barriers that life brings our way. We develop a way of life that, we hope, will be the best *human* life that *we* can lead.

The social alienation expressed in the entertainment industry: sloth and lust

One major way of participating in a morally sick way in a free society is devotion to the fame and the status of celebrity, and pleasure provided through entertainment. I consider the problem here as one of sloth, laziness, and indifference. Capitalism and liberty did not create this moral sickness. It ought not to surprise anyone that if some people perceive they can make money at it, they will do it. In a free society, the consumer has to take responsibility for the degree to which he or she will participate in a sick and self-destructive way. Sloth is a serious form of demonstrating lack of care and concern for the people with whom one has contact and the environment in which one lives. People who obsess about celebrities and television shows often do so in order to avoid dealing with real relationships and problems. This sickness requires healing of the soul in a way that opens individuals to genuine relationship with their world.

The unprecedented impact the media (principally television and movies) are having on human values within our society becomes more apparent each day. Media seems preoccupied with dehumanizing portrayals, sensationalized through mass media "entertainment" and "news." These practices degrade humankind and violate the teachings of Christ and the Bible.

The churches and all persons concerned with the moral ties that bind us need awareness of the ways the media undermine Christian values, promote permissive styles of life, and detailed acts of graphic violence. Instead of encouraging, motivating, and

inspiring its audiences to adopt lifestyles based on the sanctity of life, the entertainment industry often advocates the opposite, painting a cynical picture of violence, abuse, greed, profanity, and a constant denigration of the family. Citizens can hold the media accountable for the part they play in the decline of values we observe in society today. Many in the media remain aloof to the issue, claiming to reflect rather than to influence society. For the sake of our human family, Christians and all persons concerned with the moral fabric of the nation must work together to halt this erosion of moral and ethical values in the world community. They can do this by encouraging people to reflect upon what they support by their viewing on television, movies, and other media sources, express personal concerns directly to the media, and express concerns to corporate sponsors.

Families need to discuss what they value. Many people have gotten lazy, assuming that good values will automatically re-assert themselves. However, people teach values both by what they say and how they live. In terms of our intimate family relationships, the way we live in the presence of each other and with our children is the most important teacher of values. We need to know what we value. Our personal values, the value of interpersonal relationships, our spiritual values, the way we value success, will all have powerful influences upon our lives and our children.

The point is, we need to realize the importance of values and character in our lives. When our values are important to us and determine the way we live, our children will have greater likelihood of connecting with them. Decisions we make concerning career, friends, where we live, how we spend our time and money, will affect what we teach our children with our lives.

Television is an important shaper of values. We cannot talk about culture and the harm culture can bring to human life without talking about television. It entertains us. It informs us. It creates a community. For me, television represents an enticement toward sloth, the sluggard as Proverbs puts it. The Greek word is acedia, or indifference. Although laziness is an important part of this sin, it also consists in coming to a place where we no longer care about our lives or the lives of others.

Here are some facts from *The Wall Street Journal* concerning television:

> 98% of all American homes have a TV. In fact, more homes in America have a TV than have a flush toilet or indoor plumbing.
>
> Nearly half of all homes in America have more than one TV. Our family of two has three televisions.
>
> 85% of Americans watch television every day.
>
> The average home has the television on for seven hours and two minutes a day. Next to working and sleeping, Americans spend more time watching television than they do anything else.

Most people greatly underestimate how much television they watch. A.C. Nielson and *U.S. News and World Report* did a study of this matter. The average child age 2-11 watches 25.5 hours a week. By the time preschoolers begin kindergarten, they have already spent more time in front of the TV than they will in earning a college degree. By the time children finish high school, they have spent a total of 12,000 hours in the classroom. In the same time, children have spent over 20,000 hours in front of the television. The average teenager watches 22.5 hours a week. The average adult man watches 24.5 hours a week. The average adult woman averages 30 hours a week. We will amass 9.5 solid years of television viewing. This ought to remind us of the little decisions we make every day add up to making major decisions of what we do with our lives. Is watching TV the way we want to spend 9.5 years of our lives?

We are going to use our televisions. In our family, we have added music to the list of reasons to have the television turned on, adding on to the movies and news we generally watch. Some families surf the Internet with their television. I have been hooked on the TV show 24 as well. However, as with so many of the opportunities with which our culture presents us, we have to gain wisdom and discernment in how we use them. Fortunately, our government is not going make that decision for us. If we do not learn how to use wisely the TV for our benefit and the benefit of our families, it will bring us closer to indifference and sloth.

Many articles express concern for what television does to children. While that is important, I also have a concern for what it does to adults. Television can do several things.

First, television can shape our values. Commercials bombard us with questionable messages, "You've got to have this Kitchen Magician!" Many people have observed that people used to get their values from home, church, and school. Now we get them from TV. Totalitarian countries shape the values of the people through forced education and propaganda. Americans have the difficult task of discerning the values promoted through the various messages contained in TV programs and advertising. As with most areas of American life, a fact for which I am grateful, the responsibility is upon us.

Second, television causes unrealistic expectations. It blurs our perception of reality. On television, people can solve any problem in thirty minutes. It does not matter if it is suicide, bankruptcy, rebellious kids, World War III... it will be resolved by the end of the show. Of course, few problems in life have instant solutions.

Third, television numbs our sensitivity to suffering. Before television, most of the problems of which we had awareness were local. Now, the problems of those around the globe come into our homes on a regular basis. Studies have shown that people who watch TV have greater fears than those who do not. With all the graphic devastations and hurts, after a while our minds click off and go numb.

Fourth, from a Christian perspective, it can numb our resistance to sin by glamorizing it. It looks so good on TV. It implies that everybody is doing it and fails to show the consequences of sin by getting us to laugh at it. A. W. Tozer said, "America has lost its ability to blush." Does anything shock us anymore? When was the last time we changed channels because a show offended us? Television is a form of fellowship. When we sit down with the television, it is like inviting somebody into our home. Do we really want to invite certain shows and characters into our homes and make them part of our family?

Fifth, television can replace our relationships subtly. We can care more about the people on television than we do our lives, the lives of our neighbors, or the lives of members of the family. We can know more about the land of make believe than we do the real life we face. I still like to watch the X-Files. When it was still an active show, I liked to talk with other fans about the most recent episode with Fox Mulder and Scully. One survey of children 4-6 years old said that 44% of the children preferred television to time with dad. Watching television at night can be an excuse for couples not to talk to each other.

Six, television can make us passive. Television can be hypnotic. We can veg out. It can keep a person glued to a chair for hours on end. It is not by accident that Marie Winn wrote a book called *Television, the Plug In Drug*.

Good Housekeeping did a research project. They showed an experiment on addiction that took place in Detroit. The addiction was TV. "A Detroit newspaper offered 120 families $500 each if they would agree to not watch TV for a month." Ninety-three turned it down. Of those who took the deal, the result was all kinds of withdrawal symptoms. TV has a greater affect on us than we think.

Seven, television wastes our time. Have you ever felt cheated at the end of an evening? You thought, "What in the world did I do that for?" When I became sick, one day, I simply watched TV all day. I did not feel like doing anything else. After I was done, I knew I had wasted the day. I also wondered how many people in our country do this, even when they are not sick.

Of course, television can offer many positive and educational features. We might watch the news. We might watch the Discovery Channel and the History Channel. I have enjoyed programs like Monk, 24, Boston Legal, Lost, the 4400, and Friends. My wife enjoys watching figure skating, gymnastics, and animal shows.

The bottom line is, we have to learn to control our use of all form of media: radio, music, movies, and so on. Such media can turn us into passive creatures. It will encourage slothfulness in the sense that we will resist the God-given, upward movement toward the best human life we can lead.

One way to filter our use of television and other media is to wait for the DVD version of the movies and shows we watch. The commercials entice us toward greed,

envy, and lust. We can avoid them by waiting. We can watch movies in the privacy of our homes on our time, thereby saving money. We may choose to support types of movies in their first weekend, or avoid other types of movies, thereby informing the entertainment industry of what we want to see. In waiting, we move against the wave of often-false excitement that the entertainment industry encourage. It wants us to act now, and us consumers need to resist the pressure.

Another problem of participating in American society is the pursuit of pleasure. This moral sickness reflects the problem of lust. In a free society, one ought to expect that some people will seek to make money by building upon lust. A free society is not a moral society. Consumers will need to determine the degree to which they will support such industries. Generally, human beings experience lust as the magnification of genuine human pleasure into a false god. At some level, they think that if they could just have enough pleasure, particularly focused on sex, they would have happiness. This manner of participating in American society is nothing new. American society and modern life did not create the abuse of sex. What one needs is the wisdom and spiritual guidance of the religious traditions in the proper enjoyment of sex within boundaries that show respect for the worth and dignity of individuals.

The major question many people in our society ask is this: How does it make me feel? We value experience. If it gives me a feeling of pleasure, then it must be good. Even oil companies get into the act with one of them advertising, “Experience the difference.”

According to the book, *The Unreality Industry*, pleasure is big business. Everything has to entertain us. Neil Postman, in *We Are Amusing Ourselves to Death*, suggested that Boston represented America in the 1700’s, Chicago and New York

represented America in the 1800's, and Las Vegas represents America in the last half of the 1900's.

Here is the human condition that faces us. We have a society that focuses on having fun to the point where we think that the purpose of our lives is to enjoy ourselves. People in our society often have a tendency to seek excessive and immediate pleasure. Yet, life is far more significant than simply giving ourselves pleasure for the moment. In fact, if we make pleasure the goal of our lives, we open ourselves to many dangers.

First, self-control is a virtue about which many Americans have never heard. Without self-control, we may feel enslaved to self-destructive forces. Too often, we say to ourselves, "If only I had stopped myself" The failure to control tempers, appetites, passions, and impulses has led to much personal distress. The control we achieve over ourselves gives us increased control over our destiny. This is freedom. Self-discipline helps us determine the priorities we attach to ourselves, to the people around us, to God, to society, to material things, and to pleasure. God has a purpose for our lives. God wants us to have a positive influence upon the lives of others. God has something for us to accomplish with our lives through our passions, gifts, and abilities. We are not here simply to find our place in the sun.

Second, the pursuit of pleasure often causes conflict in relationships.

Third, the pursuit of pleasure tempts us to do what we know is wrong. Most of us have used the phrase, "Ugly as sin." Sin is not ugly. The reason the wrong is so tempting is that it is so attractive. Think of it this way. Love is a marathon runner. Lust is in for the 10-yard dash. If pleasure is the most important thing in our lives, we will do anything to experience it even if it is wrong. We pay a terrible price for lust: unwanted babies,

abortion, divorce, and sexual diseases. Sex is a beautiful plant. It grows best when planted in the soil of commitment and fidelity.

The relationship between men and women is complex. We talk a lot about sex. People know much about the mechanics of sex, but little about love. People want intimate friendship, and settle for sex. Lust is not a casual glance, but uncontrolled sexual passion. Love is friendship, empathy, sympathy, and passion. Lust bypasses everything else and moves directly to passion. Lust produces bad sex because it eliminates relationships and turns the other person into an object or a thing. Pornography feeds on lust.

Fourth, the pursuit of pleasure often leads to boredom. Such is the problem of self-indulgence. Life is more than one party after another, no matter how good the party may be for the moment. If we repeat something enough times, it will not give us the same thrill. This works with relatively healthy things. I have always liked reading. However, I have learned that I need to focus on the best books. I have kept expanding the type of reading and the complexity of reading. It gives me pleasure, it makes be a better teacher and preacher, and it makes be a better person. Of course, it can also work in the reverse. If we take a drug, we need a bigger hit in order to give ourselves pleasure. Too much of a good thing ruins balance. Too much of our favorite food will ruin that food. In a spiritually balanced life, we enjoy pleasure because we balance it with work, rest, relationships, and other activities. The inevitable result of the pursuit of pleasure is boredom and despair.

Fifth, the pursuit of pleasure destroys character. The self-indulgent life is also self-destructive, suicidal life. We can all think of people who have made it in the entertainment industry, and who then died young. Some people who can do whatever

they want and whenever they want never learn the spiritual balance they need for a genuinely happy life.

I want to suggest that pleasure goes through four stages. First is the fascination stage. "I wonder what it would feel like to do this... I wonder what it would feel like to eat this... to snort this... to shoot this... to smoke this... to have this kind of experience." Phase 2 is preoccupation. Phase 3 is addiction where it begins to control you. Phase 4 is inevitable destruction.

Modern agriculture and the food supply

Many people have suspicion of the quality of the food supply introduced by modern forms of farming. Their solution is “sustainable agriculture.” What I have to say here is primarily focused upon the freedom of producers and consumers to make informed choices in these areas.

Sustainable agriculture integrates three main goals: environmental stewardship, farm profitability, and prosperous farming communities. These goals have been defined by a variety of disciplines and may be looked at from the vantage point of the farmer or the consumer.

> "It's easy to understand why key individuals and organizations in agriculture have flocked to this term. After all, who would advocate a 'non-sustainable agriculture?'" - Charles A. Francis.

Sustainable agriculture refers to the ability of a farm to produce food indefinitely, without causing irreversible damage to ecosystem health. Two key issues are biophysical (the long-term effects of various practices on soil properties and processes essential for crop productivity) and socio-economic (the long-term ability of farmers to obtain inputs and manage resources such as labor).

Sustainable agriculture depends on replenishing the soil while minimizing the use of non-renewable resources, such as natural gas (used in converting atmospheric nitrogen into synthetic fertilizer), or mineral ores (e.g., phosphate). Possible sources of nitrogen that would be, in principle, available indefinitely, include:

> recycling crop waste and livestock or human manure
> growing legume crops and forages such as, peanuts, or alfalfa that form symbioses with nitrogen-fixing bacteria called rhizobia
> industrial production of nitrogen by the Haber Process uses hydrogen, which is currently derived from natural gas, but could instead be made by electrolysis of water using electricity (perhaps from solar cells or windmills) or
> genetically engineering (non-legume) crops to form nitrogen-fixing symbioses or fix nitrogen without microbial symbionts.

The last option was proposed in the 1970s, but would be well beyond the capability of current (2007) technology, even if various concerns about biotechnology were addressed. Sustainable options for replacing other nutrient inputs (phosphorus, potassium, etc.) are more limited.

Factory farming is a system or method of intensive animal farming or industrial farming. Industrial agriculture is a modern form of farming that refers to the industrialized production of livestock, poultry, fish, and crops. The methods of industrial agriculture are technoscientific, economic, and political. They include innovation in agricultural machinery and farming methods, genetic technology, techniques for achieving economies of scale in production, the creation of new markets for consumption, the application of patent protection to genetic information, and global trade. These methods are widespread in developed nations and increasingly prevalent worldwide. Most of the meat, dairy, eggs, fruits, and vegetables available in supermarkets are produced using these methods of industrial agriculture. Factory farming is the practice of raising farm animals in confinement at high stocking density, often in barren

and unnatural conditions. The practice aims to produce the highest output at the lowest cost by relying on economies of scale, modern machinery, biotechnology, and global trade. To increase the yield, synthetic hormones may be used to speed growth, while antibiotics and pesticides mitigate the spread of disease exacerbated by crowded living conditions.

Factory farming attracts controversy in that the advantages such as making food production more efficient, cheap and available for a growing population are balanced against harm to the environment, the health risks of the approach and the potential abuse of animals. Criticism has increased in Europe due to a series of events associated with modern farming techniques, including incidents of swine fever, BSE, foot and mouth and bird flu together with concern over animal welfare.

The number of farms has also decreased, and their ownership is more concentrated. In the U.S., four companies produce 81 percent of cows, 73 percent of sheep, 57 percent of pigs and 50 percent of chickens. In 1967, there were one million pig farms in America; as of 2002, there were 114,000, with 80 million pigs (out of 95 million) killed each year on factory farms as of 2002, according to the U.S. National Pork Producers Council. According to the Worldwatch Institute, 74 percent of the world's poultry, 43 percent of beef, and 68 percent of eggs are produced this way.

Factory farms hold large numbers of animals, typically cows, hogs, turkeys, or chickens, often indoors, typically at high densities. The aim of the operation is to produce as much meat, eggs, or milk at the lowest possible cost. Food is supplied in place, and a wide variety of artificial methods is employed to maintain animal health and improve production, such as the use of antimicrobial agents, vitamin supplements, and growth

hormones. Physical restraints are used to control behavior regarded as undesirable. Breeding programs are used to produce animals more suited to the confined conditions and able to provide a consistent "product".

Factory farming increases food production per capita. Dennis Avery of the Hudson Institute has said, "[America is] producing 50 percent more meat per hog, partly because the hogs are becoming healthier and happier as more of them move indoors." Avery has identified the knowledge divide concerning farm animals between concerned-yet-ignorant city dwellers and farmers: "We are . . . told by urbanites, who don't raise livestock or poultry, that confinement feeding is cruel for the birds and animals, and bad for the environment. Yet birds and animals are more comfortable in confinement [and] grow faster on less food."

One of the most obvious environmental problems that arises out of high density farming is that animals produce significant amounts of waste that need to be disposed of, both within the housing and then also from the factory site. Whilst in low density outdoor farming this can be coped with by stock and crop rotation, intensive techniques, especially on the industrial scale of a factory farm, have the potential to create significant environmental hazards. Denis Avery of the Hudson Institute's agricultural think-tank, the Center for Global Food Issues, has called modern farming a "conservation triumph," because it involves getting higher yields of crops and livestock from land. He predicts that, after 2050, three billion pigs will be needed annually to meet demand: "For the sake of the environment," he writes, "we had better hope those hogs are raised in big, efficient confinement systems."

The large concentration of animals, animal waste, and the potential for dead animals in a small space poses ethical issues. It is recognized that some techniques used to sustain intensive agriculture can be cruel to animals. As awareness of the problems of intensive techniques has grown, there have been some efforts by governments and industry to remove inappropriate techniques.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), farms on which animals are intensively reared can cause adverse health reactions in farm workers. Workers may develop acute and chronic lung disease, musculoskeletal injuries, and may catch infections that transmit from animals to human beings.

The parental role of government and retirement

We have begun to see the internal weaknesses and perverse incentives in the American form of social insurance. As pay-as-you-go social insurance systems mature in every country, they face a classic problem as the society ages: The out-lays needed to pay for the promised benefits force the system into structural imbalance and huge unfunded obligations.

Samuel Butler, in his August 29, 2007 lecture “Restoring the American Social Contract,” has outlined the basic steps needed to make Social Security viable.

First, we must gradually transform our existing social insurance programs into "true insurance." This means that we should begin to restrict the availability of benefits in Social Security and Medi-care to those who really need assistance while strengthening the benefits for those who find the existing assistance to be insufficient.

This step would return these programs to the basic principles of the American idea of the social contract, in which we all contribute as members of society to the

protection of ourselves as individuals through social programs and the assistance is limit-ed to what is needed to enable a person to return to independence. Today, Social Security and Medicare violate that basic principle.

Second, we need to decide as a nation how much of our resources we are willing to contribute to such programs, given America's economic resources and the other goals of our society. Today we do not do that. Major entitlement programs, such as Medicare and Social Security, are open-ended, one-way com-mitments in which an individual can legally claim benefits. They will be paid by society whether or not the individual needs them and without regard to the financial burden on future generations. These enti-tlements automatically preempt resources for other needs, such as education or defense.

We need instead a budget process that encourages lawmakers to set priorities and make rational decisions between competing priorities. To do that, we would have to make a number of changes in the laws governing the budget process. For example, Members of Congress today vote on a budget with-out anyone forcing them to consider any information about the long-term unfunded obligations that may occur because of their decisions and without having to vote explicitly on raising those obligations. They need to change this process, with Members of Congress forced to vote up or down to authorize any increase in total unfunded obligations.

More broadly, we need to end the special status of entitlement programs that allows them to pre-empt all other needs, replacing open-ended obligations with fixed budgets. To be sure, it is appropriate to establish long-term budgets for pro-grams designed to protect individuals, just as many other industrialized countries do, but these

budgets must be real and limited and established in the con-text of other goals. If spending begins to exceed the budget, then they need to adjust the budget—in competition with other regular budget goals—as they must curb and refocus benefits.

Third, we need to stimulate greater individual responsibility by encouraging increased private savings and insurance among middle- and upper-income individuals. For the most part, these individuals should not be relying on social programs except for unpredictable circumstances so severe that we would not ordinarily expect an individual to have saved or insured sufficiently.

Fourth, it is time to envision a different role for employers. A strong and effective social contract requires the society or subgroup of society within which the mutual obligation rests to have a common interest as the basis of mutual support. However, the place of employment typically does not exhibit these characteristics, so we should empower individuals and families to link the security and provision of health and financial protections to the civil society institutions with which they identify most closely.

The present retirement system needs reform. One immediate reform is a combination of indexing benefits and increases in the retirement age in order to reduce the financial burden upon future generations. A second reform is to allow a portion of present social security payments for investment by younger workers into a 401k retirement plan. Another reform involves the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation, which may require a government bailout of major proportions, given the difficulty defined benefit programs now have.

The parental role of government and health care

The parental role of government concerning health care is of great concern right now. Many citizens find themselves drawn toward a single pay system, replacing present programs of Medicare and Medicaid. They would urge Congress to implement mandatory universal health care run by the Federal Government. Universal health care is synonymous with government-run health care. While candidates praise the virtues of such coverage, the reality is far different. In a government-run system, the government can control costs, but this is done through rationing. For examples of how this works in practice, one need look no further than Canada or Great Britain, where patients must wait months or years to see a physician and receive treatment for basic, non-emergency ailments. Such a system of rationing inevitably takes a toll upon people's health and life expectancy. The problem with such a system is that the one who pays for health care will also control how they spend the money. Americans will surrender control of how they spend their health care dollars in such a system. Further, the increases in Medicare and Medicaid have become burdensome. The government already controls about half of the health care spending in the United States. Yet, the solution to health care issues facing this country for some is to increase government to 100%.

The major problem with health care is that Americans have ceded to the Federal Government a role it should not have, particularly because the United States Constitution does not enumerate health care as a power of the Federal Government.

Health care and education are the two most regulated industries in America, and, consequently, two of the most expensive and staid. If the Federal Government would move out of the health industry and deregulate the market prices would fall, insurance companies would become competitive, taxpayers would save money and the industry

would be much more consumer-friendly and responsive. As Scott Harrington and Tom Miller note in “Competitive Markets for Individual Health Insurance,” competition creates relentless pressure for accurate pricing. Ideally, Americans will move away from the false promises of universal health care and toward a free-market system in which competition lowers prices, creates more accountability and stimulates innovation.

I want to suggest another option. The time has come for citizens to consider the possibility that the government is actually part of the problem in health care. Other countries have tried single pay government systems, and the results are not as good as the United States has now. Further, because of federal programs, a hospital cannot deny care to anyone who comes into their facility, regardless of whether they have insurance.

One possible way is to offer refundable tax credits. Such a system might offer a tax credit of up to a certain generous amount, reducing the tax owed or even qualifying for a refund. In this way, the poor would still have control over how they spend their health care dollars, while at the same time receiving a greater refund. Another possible way is to allow the purchase of health insurance that reduces the taxable income of the insured family. Such proposals allow individuals to maintain a great degree control over how the spend their health care dollars. The same is true for Health Savings Accounts.

One can participate in a free and capitalist society in a way destructive of bodily and mental health. Work can consume one to the point of refusing to care properly for the body. The food industry will try to make money by enticing consumers to purchase their product. Some of it will not be good for us if eaten in extremes. Some portions will be bigger than we ought to have for the sake of our health. A free and capitalist society places the responsibility upon consumers to make these decisions. In fact, if consumers

demand healthier food options, businesses will respond. The education of citizens regarding health styles of life will enhance the way in which citizens participate in society. Christianity itself emphasizes that the body is the temple of Holy Spirit. As such, human beings are to respect their bodies. Society itself, in extending respect to individuals, must also respect their bodies.

More than half of the total health-care costs is accounted for by treatment for seven conditions: 1) Osteoporosis, 2) diabetes, 3) depression, 4) arthritis, 5) Alzheimer's, 6) cardiovascular diseases, 7) Cancer.

The current health system does need fixing. It distorts pricing and demand, is inequitable, and is alternately wasteful and miserly. Too many people are locked into jobs they do not like because they are afraid of losing their health insurance, and millions more do not have coverage at all, forcing them to go untreated or obtain care in crowded hospital emergency rooms.

The other side of the story is that 75% of Americans are reasonably satisfied with their own health care. The two hundred million American who are covered with insurance are insulated from the true costs of medical services. For example, if you had a "food insurer" who picked up 80% of the food bill, what you do? Undoubtedly, there would be little incentive to be cost conscious, and you would likely buy caviar and prime steaks instead of lesser quality. Luxury items would push moderately priced goods off the shelves, and people without food insurance would find the price of food prohibitive. Now, who are those who are non-insured? Many are young people in entry-level jobs, the self-employed, the working poor who earn too much to qualify for Medicaid, or workers who are between jobs. Half of the non-insured at any given time will be such for four

months. Only about 15% are chronically non-insured, meaning for over two years. Yet, it is for this group that many are willing to impose heavy burdens on the rest of society.

"Universal health insurance" is a myth. The only way to make health care "affordable" under a "universal health insurance" scheme is through price controls and limiting access. Any proposal claiming to provide "universal coverage" is nothing more than a system that must rely on private and/or public entities to administer government-run health care. Government at all levels needs to stop delivering mandates to insurance companies. Government price controls on health care costs are not helpful. Government sponsored agencies for re-insurance are not needed.

We need to restore the true meaning of insurance. The fear of the middle class is not that they will not be able to afford flu shots. The fear is bankrupting medical bills in the event of catastrophic illness. Those who want such a pre-payment plan of routine medical expenses should be able to purchase that type of insurance. However, those who would prefer coverage that is more limited and pay for routine expense out of their own pockets should be able to purchase that type of insurance. This would discourage an overuse of the system.

Any attempt to provide universal health care coverage must include the following principles, reflections received from The Affordable Health Care Agenda.

One, any health care reform proposal must allow all Americans to choose their own doctor, hospital, and health plan. People should be able to choose what services they want covered. Furthermore, no reform proposal should coerce any American into buying a health plan designed by the government or be required to join a government-created, government-funded, or government-run purchasing pool or connector where the

government selects health benefits and plans from which to choose. Instead of having prepackaged, one-size-fits-all plans, consumers could choose what they can afford and need. The cost of health insurance is exceedingly high in some states because state law mandates coverage for podiatrists, acupuncturists, massage therapists and others, according to Larry Elder in Investors Business Daily. The average healthy person has no need of such services and potentially might have more willingness to purchase a cheaper insurance plan that did not include non-essential benefits.

Two, Health Savings Accounts are the only health plan that allows free choice of doctors and hospitals while providing incentives to reduce health care spending. Therefore, HSAs must be an option for all Americans, including those who are beneficiaries of government health care programs, such as Medicaid and Medicare. Any regulations or obstacles to making HSAs an option for Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries must be removed to meet this goal.

Three, the current tax break for health insurance is discriminatory, unfair, and, messy. Employer-provided health insurance is tax free from income and payroll taxes. Self-employed individuals get to deduct the cost of their premiums from income. Consumers who buy their own policy get no tax break. Workers who are displaced from a job due to a trade agreement get a 65 percent tax credit under the Health Care Tax Credit (HCTC). This mess cannot continue. The tax break for health insurance needs to be fair, nondiscriminatory, and apply to all Americans whether they get their health insurance from their employer or not.

Four, fewer and fewer small employers are providing health insurance because of the cost. The cost of health insurance is especially painful for tiny employers who employ

fewer than 10 employees. Benefit mandates and regulatory mandates, such as HIPAA's guaranteed issue mandate on small employers, apply to state-regulated, fully insured plans. Large employers who self-insure under ERISA escape all the benefit mandates at the state level and have more flexibility in designing a health care plan for their employees. Small employers should be allowed to join together across state lines and have the same flexibility that large employers enjoy.

Five, insurance should be portable. Individuals who buy their own health insurance plan and many small employers are limited in the type of health insurance that they can buy. Most are forced to buy insurance in their state that contains all the benefit mandates and benefit regulations imposed on them by state legislators. Consumers should be able to purchase insurance wherever they want, from an insurance company incorporated in any state in the Union. Families in Minnesota are forced to buy a health plan that contains 62 mandates, while families in Idaho can buy a plan with 13 mandates. In New Jersey, a family HMO costs $1,652 per month, while a family can buy a HMO plan in Pennsylvania for $707 per month! According to Senator Tom Coburn, M.D. (R-OK) in "Competition: A Prescription for Health Care Transformation," published by the Heritage Foundation, the price of a health insurance policy in New Jersey is seven times that of one in Kentucky. The Constitution permits interstate commerce, so American families should be allowed to buy health insurance that meets their health care needs and should be allowed to buy insurance from other states. If a family in Idaho wants to buy a health care plan with all of Minnesota's 63 mandates, they should have the choice to buy. If a family in Minnesota wants to buy a health care plan with Idaho's 13 mandates, they should have that choice.

Six, since the creation of HSAs, more than 6 million Americans have chosen them for their health care needs. While more Americans will continue to choose HSAs, it is important for America's families to know the cost of health care. Hospitals mark up their prices dramatically – some more than 500 percent – so it is important for an open health care system for shoppers to know the cost of the care that is being provided.

Hospitals and doctors should be encouraged as a condition of accepting Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement to publish their cost to provide the care. They should also publish the reimbursement schedule from various payers, including Medicare and insurance companies, so consumers will be better educated.

Seven, thirty-three states have high risk pools that provide health insurance to people who are sick and can't get health insurance. This population represents a small portion of the country, but they should not be left out of America's health care system because they are sick. Congress has historically provided federal dollars to encourage states to establish a high risk pool for people who are sick, and states have taken advantage of these federal dollars. Congress should continue to provide incentives for states to establish high risk pools so people who are sick can have access to affordable health insurance.

Eight, the federal government provides nearly $20 billion dollars a year in disproportionate payments (DSH) to hospitals that treat people who do not have health insurance. Considerable evidence exists that hospitals actually collect and profit from uninsured patients. DSH payments should be sent to the states in the form of health care block grants. States would be required to use those DSH payments to provide vouchers for private health insurance for the uninsured.

Nine, more than a hundred thousand Americans choose not to buy health insurance because they belong to nonprofit, faith-based organizations that share each other's health care costs. These Americans should be allowed to continue this alternative way to access our nation's health care system and should not be coerced into buying health insurance.

Ten, consolidation and mergers of hospitals have led to actual or near-monopoly conditions in many communities in the United States. Monopoly always leads to excessive prices, poor quality, and lack of innovation. The biggest obstacle to increasing innovation and competition are the Certificate of Need laws that are still in effect in most states. These laws are 1970s style regulations that allow existing facilities to block the establishment of new competitors. They should be repealed.

Eleven reduce the administrative overhead with which employers and insurance companies are burdened. Sen. Tom Coburn notes that administration and processing currently account for 6% of health care costs, which may seem small until one realizes that 6% is in the range of $125 billion.

Twelve, reform Medicare and Medicaid. Much like the antiquated systems of Canada and Britain, government bureaucrats who decide what services and drugs patients can have, when they can have them and how much the government will pay for them, direct Medicare and Medicaid. Consequently, access and care are not the same for those dependent upon Medicare and Medicaid as they are for those on private or employer-sponsored health insurance. It is difficult immediately to eradicate entitlements, like Medicare and Medicaid, once a large number of people are dependent upon them. Perhaps the place to begin is to eliminate overlap between the two programs and to

streamline those who are on both into one or the other. In spite of the difficulty, the government must reform these two soon. If left unchanged projections suggest that Medicare and Medicaid will consume 16.2% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the coming years.

The parental role of government in limiting drugs and tobacco

Ought the parental role of government to extend to prohibition of drugs and tobacco? If it does not, ought the government to so regulate and tax their use as to make it almost impossible? Clearly, the lack of personal discipline in such matters can lead to weakening further the social bonds that hold society together.

The spread of the abuse of alcohol and other drugs dehumanizes those who use them and the relationships in such persons engage. For the Christian, the Bible is quite clear concerning the avoidance of drunkenness. The only instances of total abstinence, which many denominations recommend, are that of the vow the Nazarite took in the Old Testament and the Rechabites in Jeremiah 35. Another clear example is that of the story of Samson in Judges 13. John the Baptist apparently also took the same vow in Luke 1:15. However, aside from such special cases, Israelites drank wine. The problem was with over consumption.

Drug use is wrong because of what it does to human character. It degrades the one who uses it. It makes people less than they should be by burning away a sense of responsibility, subverting productivity, and making a mockery of virtue. It destroys the moral sense one has. Addicted people neglect their duties to family, friends, and work. Addicted people will get to a place where nothing else matters but the drug. Drugs inhibit the practice of virtues like autonomy, self-reliance, and individual responsibility. Drugs

stimulate people to escape reality and society, and thus from the moral obligations they owe their family, friends, and fellow citizens. Drugs destroy the emotional life and sense of duty that makes social life possible. A self-governing society cannot become neutral regarding something that so affects human character and personal responsibility.

Of course, some persons, including some political conservatives, favor decriminalizing some drugs. The point at issue is two-fold. Does society prohibiting the use of a product that a significant number of its citizens want actually work? Prohibition tends to increase crime. Pushers lure children and youth into the illegal drag trade. In the climate of today, use of illegal drugs supports terrorism. Further, they become the forbidden fruit of society. Drug dealers receive large profits because of its illegal status. The experience of the United States with prohibition is not a good one, for it taught us how quickly organized crime will provide what people want. The other point is that of personal liberty. People who think in a libertarian direction will make this argument. People ought to do what they wish with their bodies, including consumption of substances destructive to the person. How far ought society to go in governing personal behavior?

Currently, there is widespread scientific agreement that passive smoking is harmful, with little or no scientific dissent. The link between passive smoking and lung cancer is widely accepted; while there is general agreement regarding the existence of a link between passive smoking and heart disease, as reported by the WHO and Surgeon The magnitude of the increased risk remains debated by a minority of epidemiologists. For example, John Bailar of the National Academy of Sciences questioned the proportionality of the passive smoking risk, stating, "Regular smoking only increases the

risk of cardiovascular disease by 75%, so how could second-hand smoke, which is much more dilute, have an effect one-third that size?" One explanation put forward is that secondhand smoke is not simply a diluted version of "mainstream" smoke, but has a different composition with more toxic substances per gram of total particulate matter. For other scientists, on the other hand, the risk of passive smoking, in particular the risk of developing coronary heart diseases, may have been substantially underestimated.

The health benefit to non-smokers of smoking bans has also been disputed by a small number of epidemiologists, who call for a prospective trial to more accurately determine the benefit. These epidemiologists advocate indoor smoking bans, but express a concern that widespread outdoor smoking bans, as implemented by some towns in the U.S., may be unsupported by the evidence available thus far.

How far ought government to go as the parent of its citizens in such matters?

Other forms of social alienation

Of course, one might refer to others forms that social alienation may take.

The disabled may sense alienation when society provides no avenue for their participation in it.

Those of same gender sexual orientation may sense alienation when pathways to their participation in it have been blocked, particular when their relationships have no legal standing.

Vast changes in rural, urban, and suburban life can lead to the feeling of dislocation and alienation in which local political, community, and economic leaders will need to work hard to overcome.

The participation of human beings in medical experimentation ought to include their rational and informed consent.

Genetic technology has the potential of damaging social relationships. Human cloning is a process condemned by most religions. From a non-religious perspective, cloning preserves the defects of its origin. Gene therapy can be helpful in replacing defective genes with healthy ones, thereby relieving human suffering. When people use it for the human manipulation of hereditary characteristics (germ-line therapy), we enter a realm that has great potential for social harm. Of course, genetic data on individuals needs to be carefully guarded.

162

The rights and privileges a society bestows upon or withholds from those who comprise it indicate the relative esteem in which that society holds particular persons and groups of persons.

We affirm all persons as equally valuable in the sight of God. We therefore work toward societies in which each person's value is recognized, maintained, and strengthened.

We support the basic rights of all persons to equal access to housing, education, communication, employment, medical care, legal redress for grievances, and physical protection. We deplore acts of hate or violence against groups or persons based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, or economic status.

Rights of Racial and Ethnic Persons

Racism is the combination of the power to dominate by one race over other races and a value system that assumes that the dominant race is innately superior to the others. Racism includes both personal and institutional racism. Personal racism is manifested through the individual expressions, attitudes, and/or behaviors that accept the assumptions of a racist value system and that maintain the benefits of this system.

Institutional racism is the established social pattern that supports implicitly or explicitly the racist value system. Racism plagues and cripples our growth in Christ, inasmuch as it is antithetical to the gospel itself. White people are unfairly granted privileges and benefits that are denied to persons of color. Racism breeds racial discrimination. We define racial discrimination as the disparate treatment and lack of full access to resources and opportunities in the church and in society based on race or

ethnicity. Therefore, we recognize racism as sin and affirm the ultimate and temporal worth of all persons.

We rejoice in the gifts that particular ethnic histories and cultures bring to our total life. We commend and encourage the self-awareness of all racial and ethnic groups and oppressed people that leads them to demand their just and equal rights as members of society. We assert the obligation of society and groups within the society to implement compensatory programs that redress long-standing, systemic social deprivation of racial and ethnic people.

We further assert the right of members of racial and ethnic groups to equal opportunities in employment and promotion; to education and training of the highest quality; to nondiscrimination in voting, in access to public accommodations, and in housing purchase or rental; to credit, financial loans, venture capital, and insurance policies; and to positions of leadership and power in all elements of our life together. We support affirmative action as one method of addressing the inequalities and discriminatory practices within our Church and society.

Concerning compensatory programs, James Farmer, founder of the Congress of Racial Equality, held a meeting with then vice president Lyndon B. Johnson. Farmer proposed that a program that he called Compensatory Preferential Treatment should be put in place in order to advance the equality of the black race. In 1965, Johnson (then president) renamed Compensatory Preferential Treatment "affirmative action" in a famous speech at Howard University, which became the national justification for moving the country beyond nondiscrimination to a more vigorous effort to improve the status of black Americans:

> "You do not take a person who, for many years, has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line in a race and then say, 'you are free to compete with all the others', and still justly believe that you have been completely fair."

It was a counter-argument to the previously prevailing notion of meritocracy. The skills that merit-based admission rewards are cultivated in children by parents with money. Affirmative action was to be a method by which minorities could eventually develop those skills in their own children.

Book of Resolutions #61 supports the study and discussion of reparations paid to African-Americans, as well as the passage of H. R. 40, proposed by Rep. John Conyers, Democrat from New York.

Affirmative action in the United States is a policy or a program intended to promote access to education, employment, or housing among certain designated groups (typically, minorities or women). The stated motivation for affirmative action policies is to redress the effects of past discrimination and to encourage public institutions such as universities, hospitals and police forces to be more representative of the population. It is commonly achieved through targeted recruitment programs, by preferential treatment given to applicants from designated groups, and in some cases through the use of quotas.

Proponents of affirmative action generally advocate it as a means to address past or present discrimination or to enhance racial, ethnic, gender, or other diversity.

However, opponents of affirmative action contend that affirmative action programs are discriminatory and that they result in the promotion of under-qualified individuals over higher qualified individuals on the basis on race, ethnicity, and gender.

In the United States, affirmative action mostly applies at transition points in a person's life: when enrolling for an education, when applying for employment, or when seeking housing. Thus, affirmative action has the greatest impact on young people and has little direct effect on the lives of older, more-established members of society.

The overall framework of affirmative action in the United States was established by Executive Order 10925, issued in March 1961 by President John F. Kennedy, but has evolved significantly. The original order required government contractors to take "affirmative action" to ensure equal treatment of applicants and employees "without

regard to their race, creed, color, or national origin." Today, however, affirmative action is widely considered to mean preferential treatment for certain groups.

Affirmative action has been the subject of numerous court cases, where it is often contested on constitutional grounds.

Individual American states (such as Missouri, California, Washington and Michigan) also have orders that prohibit discrimination and outline affirmative action requirements with regard to race, creed, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, gender, age, and disability status.

Economist Dr. Thomas Sowell, identified the following as results of affirmative action based on a review of Affirmative Action Around the World: An Empirical Study (ISBN 0-300-10199-6, 2004:

They encourage non-preferred groups to designate themselves as members of preferred groups [i.e. primary beneficiary of affirmative action] to take advantage of group preference policies;

They tend to benefit primarily the most fortunate among the preferred group (e.g., wealthy blacks), often to the detriment of the least fortunate among the non-preferred groups (e.g., poor whites);

They reduce the incentives of both the preferred and non-preferred to perform at their best — the former because doing so is unnecessary and the latter because it can prove futile — thereby resulting in net losses for society as a whole; and

They engender animosity toward preferred groups as well as on the part of preferred groups themselves, whose main problem in some cases has been their own

inadequacy combined with their resentment of non-preferred groups who — without preferences — consistently outperform them.

Sowell also argued the following points.

What about the notion that affirmative action has helped blacks rise out of poverty? The black poverty rate was cut in half before affirmative action — and has barely changed since then.

What about the notion that blacks would not be able to get into colleges and universities without affirmative action? After group preferences and quotas were banned in California's state universities, the number of black students in the University of California system has risen.

"Minority students are systematically mismatched with institutions" due to racial preferences, where they underperform relative to the student body. Had they gone to an institution without the help of affirmative action, to a less selective school, they would have received better grades and graduated at higher rates.

"When the top-level schools recruit black students who would normally be qualified to succeed at the level next to the top, then the second tier of institutions faces the prospect of either being conspicuously lacking in minority students or (2) dipping down to the next level below to bring in enough minority students for a statistically respectable "representation." Usually they end up mismatching students. Once begun at the top, this process continues on down the line."

One argument against AA (affirmative action) is that it represents government sanctioned racial discrimination, and is demeaning to members of minority groups - that affirmative action wrongly sends a condescending message to minorities that they are not

capable enough to be considered on their own merits. If this argument is to be believed, AA promotes the idea that underrepresented minorities do not and cannot emphasize education and high academic achievement as much as the racial majority or "Model Minorities." Many supporters of affirmative action charge that those who make this argument are being ethnocentric and are disingenuously trying to deflect or downplay the role of past and current institutional discrimination of minorities. These critics believe that these proponents are trying to shift the blame onto the victim who was discriminated against in the first place in order to justify rolling back government civil rights policies. Furthermore, many critics believe that those who make this argument are being naive, hypocritical, or vague in their quest to 'change the cultural values' of the minority community. Other supporters of affirmative action argue that it benefits society as a whole. They argue that the end goal of AA should not be one culture, but an embrace of all cultural heritages and, by doing so, we increase the quality of the society. This is widely argued in the realm of education. An example of support for this is a study done by Patricia Gurin, who is part of the American Psychological Association. Gurin found that students who are from a more diverse educational setting had better results in tests designed to measure complex thinking, were more motivated to understand other people’s points of view, were more understanding of differences in cultural environments, and were more confident in their intellectual ability.

Most proponents of AA believe that eradicating affirmative action would further deepen economic disparity between whites and underrepresented minorities. A common argument made for Affirmative Action is the existence of an "Old Boy's Network". Such a network, it is argued, exists where people with power in organizations are able to and

readily elect, promote, and support one another as well as others who are close to them within the organization (for example, the CEO of a company ensures that his best friend's son gets a position in the mail room of his company). Such a network, to the extent that it does exist, represents not a true 'meritocracy', but an oligarchy which creates barriers to entry into it for those who are not connected to the "Old Boy's Network". Nobody from outside the "Old Boy's Network" could be promoted 'from within' a company unless the job was also posted publicly and everyone was given a 'fair chance' via a convoluted and lengthy questionnaire and interview process (for example, the federal government accepts applicants to jobs in the department of interior or department of agriculture on the basis of a numerical score based on a lengthy set of forms and questionnaires they fill out). Those who make this argument, however, also point to the fact that the government gives preferential treatment to veterans and that many organizations give preferential treatment to employees who have worked in the organization in the past. Furthermore, there is 'geographical affirmative action', in which people are more likely to be hired if their application has a local address written on it. All of these examples show ways in which employees are hired based on non-merit criteria.

Those who disagree with this argument point out that, with the exception of the government's preferential treatment of veterans, none of these are cases of affirmative action. Affirmative action involves legal regulation of private enterprises regarding hiring practices. There is no legal regulation for or against 'geographic affirmative action', for example. This argument further runs into the problem of resting on an implicit assumption that people are either connected to the "Old Boy's Network" or a racial minority. Where would one place the black CEO or the poor white coal miner living in

West Virginia in that framework? Rather than confronting preferential treatment in a heads on kind of way, affirmative action simply creates more groups who receive preferential treatment. By legalizing and requiring preferential treatment, it promotes preferential treatment and remains mute on the vast number of people who do not fall into either of those categories (i.e., those people who are not members of the Old Boy's Network or minorities) and are discriminated against, in part, as a result of affirmative action law. In other words, opponents of affirmative action in employment and education claim that these programs encourage socioeconomic discrimination in favor of middle-class members of minority groups over better qualified but working-class members from the majority group, since such programs do not consider socioeconomic class. In essence, middle-class minorities with greater opportunities and resources at their disposal are favored over members of the working poor who happen not to be minorities (usually, poor whites). These critics believe this is contrary to claims of "social justice" made by supporters and makes AA policy in conflict with the Fourteenth Amendment.

Their argument is a fundamental objection to the use of racial quotas and gender quotas in affirmative action, because such quotas are unable to address social injustice at the fine level of detail that is required. However, proponents of AA reply that quotas are only legal in the US when a judge issues an order for a specific institution to make restitution for past discrimination. There is intense dispute over whether the de jure illegality of quotas prevents de facto quotas in an environment where there is so much pressure to protect against the appearance of discrimination against protected groups. Much time has been spent attempting to show that these "goals" are not quotas.

Critics of affirmative action believe that it rewards or punishes individuals in the present for what their group is supposed to have done in the past. For example, Mike S. Adams argues that affirmative action can be summed up as follows:

> Regardless of whether he is guilty of racism, a person is to be punished for racism carried out by other members of his racial group. Regardless of whether he is a victim of racism, a person is entitled to benefits for racism carried out against other members of his racial group.

Proponents of affirmative action respond that such discrepancies that exist are a result of historic segregation. For example, many of the state and city universities had much lower tuition fees during the time they were primarily for whites, while tuition at such institutions have grown faster than the rate of inflation now that more minorities are attending. Tuition fees at the City College of New York were free up until the 1960s when the students were primarily white, but now rival those of state universities now that most of the students are Black, Italian, or Hispanic. However, this college's alumni have among them a record (for public colleges) eight Nobel laureates, all minorities (Ashkenazi Jews.[20]). Further, a qualified minority with 90 average and a good SAT can qualify for honors college.[citation needed] Had Thurgood Marshall been admitted to Maryland, as a resident of Baltimore he would not have had to pay tuition. Howard, a private institution, had substantial tuition fees, but was at the time (the 1930s) the only ABA-accredited law program at a historically Black university.

Martin Luther King, Jr. was a proponent of preferential treatment for historically disadvantaged groups. When asked if it was fair to ask for "multi-billion dollar program of preferential treatment," King said that it was, and cited the GI Bill as a precedent for giving a particular group special treatment. He summed up his views on the subject by

saying "A society that has done something special against the Negro for hundreds of years must now do something special for the Negro."

Rights of Religious Minorities

Religious persecution has been common in the history of civilization. We urge policies and practices that ensure the right of every religious group to exercise its faith free from legal, political, or economic restrictions. We condemn all overt and covert forms of religious intolerance, being especially sensitive to their expression in media stereotyping. We assert the right of all religions and their adherents to freedom from legal, economic, and social discrimination.

Rights of Children

Once considered the property of their parents, children are now acknowledged to be full human beings in their own right, but beings to whom adults and society in general have special obligations.

Thus, we support the development of school systems and innovative methods of education designed to assist every child toward complete fulfillment as an individual person of worth. All children have the right to quality education, including full sex education appropriate to their stage of development that utilizes the best educational techniques and insights.

Christian parents and guardians and the Church have the responsibility to ensure that children receive sex education consistent with Christian morality, including faithfulness in marriage and abstinence in singleness. Moreover, children have the rights to food, shelter, clothing, health care, and emotional well-being as do adults, and these rights we affirm as theirs regardless of actions or inactions of their parents or guardians. In particular, children must be protected from economic, physical, and sexual exploitation and abuse.

The Book of Resolutions #70 encourages its members to avoid corporal punishment as a means of discipline.

Rights of Young People

Our society is characterized by a large population of youth and young adults who frequently find full participation in society difficult. Therefore, we urge development of policies that encourage inclusion of youth and young adults in decision-making processes

and that eliminate discrimination and exploitation. Creative and appropriate employment opportunities should be legally and socially available for youth and young adults.

Rights of the Aging

In a society that places primary emphasis upon youth, those growing old in years are frequently isolated from the mainstream of social existence. We support social policies that integrate the aging into the life of the total community, including sufficient incomes, increased and nondiscriminatory employment opportunities, educational and service opportunities, and adequate medical care and housing within existing communities. We urge social policies and programs, with emphasis on the unique concerns of older women and ethnic persons, that ensure to the aging the respect and dignity that is their right as senior members of the human community. Further, we urge increased consideration for adequate pension systems by employers, with provisions for the surviving spouse.

Rights of women

We affirm women and men to be equal in every aspect of their common life. We therefore urge that every effort be made to eliminate sex-role stereotypes in activity and portrayal of family life and in all aspects of voluntary and compensatory participation in the Church and society.

We affirm the right of women to equal treatment in employment, responsibility, promotion, and compensation. We affirm the importance of women in decision-making positions at all levels of Church life and urge such bodies to guarantee their presence through policies of employment and recruitment.

We support affirmative action as one method of addressing the inequalities and discriminatory practices within our Church and society. We urge employers of persons in dual career families, both in the Church and society, to apply proper consideration of both parties when relocation is considered.

We affirm the right of women to live free from violence and abuse and urge governments to enact policies that protect women against all forms of violence and discrimination in any sector of society.

Rights of Persons with Disabilities

We recognize and affirm the full humanity and personhood of all individuals with mental, physical, developmental, neurological, and psychological conditions or disabilities as full members of the family of God. We also affirm their rightful place in both the Church and society. We affirm the responsibility of the Church and society to be in ministry with children, youth, and adults with mental, physical, developmental, and/or psychological

and neurological conditions or disabilities whose particular needs in the areas of mobility, communication, intellectual comprehension, or personal relationships might make more challenging their participation or that of their families in the life of the Church and the community. We urge the Church and society to recognize and receive the gifts of persons with disabilities to enable them to be full participants in the community of faith. We call the Church and society to be sensitive to, and advocate for, programs of rehabilitation, services, employment, education, appropriate housing, and transportation. We call on the Church and society to protect the civil rights of persons with all types and kinds of disabilities.

Equal Rights Regardless of Sexual Orientation

Certain basic human rights and civil liberties are due all persons. We are committed to supporting those rights and liberties for homosexual persons.

We see a clear issue of simple justice in protecting their rightful claims where they have shared material resources, pensions, guardian relationships, mutual powers of attorney, and other such lawful claims typically attendant to contractual relationships that involve shared contributions, responsibilities, and liabilities, and equal protection before the law.

Moreover, we support efforts to stop violence and other forms of coercion against gays and lesbians. We also commit ourselves to social witness against the coercion and marginalization of former homosexuals.

Population

Since the growing worldwide population is increasingly straining the world's supply of food, minerals, and water and sharpening international tensions, the reduction of the rate of consumption of resources by the affluent and the reduction of current world population growth rates have become imperative.

People have the duty to consider the impact on the total world community of their decisions regarding childbearing and should have access to information and appropriate means to limit their fertility, including voluntary sterilization.

We affirm that programs to achieve a stabilized population should be placed in a context of total economic and social development, including an equitable use and control of resources; improvement in the status of women in all cultures; a human level of economic security, health care, and literacy for all. We oppose any policy of forced abortion or forced sterilization.

Alcohol and Other Drugs

We affirm our long-standing support of abstinence from alcohol as a faithful witness to God's liberating and redeeming love for persons. We support abstinence from

the use of any illegal drugs. Since the use of illegal drugs, as well as illegal and problematic use of alcohol, is a major factor in crime, disease, death, and family dysfunction, we support educational programs as well as other prevention strategies encouraging abstinence from illegal drug use and, with regard to those who choose to consume alcoholic beverages, judicious use with deliberate and intentional restraint, with Scripture as a guide.

Millions of living human beings are testimony to the beneficial consequences of therapeutic drug use, and millions of others are testimony to the detrimental consequences of drug misuse. We encourage wise policies relating to the availability of potentially beneficial or potentially damaging prescription and over-the-counter drugs; we urge that complete information about their use and misuse be readily available to both doctor and patient. We support the strict administration of laws regulating the sale and distribution of alcohol and controlled substances. We support regulations that protect society from users of drugs of any kind, including alcohol, where it can be shown that a clear and present social danger exists. Drug-dependent persons and their family members, including those who are assessed or diagnosed as dependent on alcohol, are individuals of infinite human worth deserving of treatment, rehabilitation, and ongoing life-changing recovery. Misuse or abuse may also require intervention, in order to prevent progression into dependence. Because of the frequent interrelationship between alcohol abuse and mental illness, we call upon legislators and health care providers to make available appropriate mental illness treatment and rehabilitation for drug-dependent persons. We commit ourselves to assisting those who suffer from abuse or dependence, and their families, in finding freedom through Jesus Christ and in finding good opportunities for treatment, for ongoing counseling, and for reintegration into society.

The Social Principles affirm abstinence from all alcohol and drugs. They appear to affirm the medical use of illegal drugs. They support laws that regulate the sale and distribution of drugs and alcohol.

Here are biblical passages that refer to excessive drinking and to the rare occasions of vow of abstinence.

Deuteronomy 21:20-21
They shall say to the elders of his town, "This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious. He will not obey us. He is a glutton and a drunkard." Then all the men of the town shall stone him to death. So you shall purge the evil from your midst; and all Israel will hear, and be afraid.

Psalm 69:12
I am the subject of gossip for those who sit in the gate, and the drunkards make songs about me.

Proverbs 23:21

for the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty, and drowsiness will clothe them with rags.

Isaiah 28:1,3
Ah, the proud garland of the drunkards of Ephraim, and the fading flower of its glorious beauty, which is on the head of those bloated with rich food, of those overcome with wine! Trampled under foot will be the proud garland of the drunkards of Ephraim.

Joel 1:5
Wake up, you drunkards, and weep; and wail, all you wine-drinkers, over the sweet wine, for it is cut off from your mouth.

Nahum 1:10
Like thorns they are entangled, like drunkards they are drunk; they are consumed like dry straw.

Luke 21:34
"Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day catch you unexpectedly,

1 Thessalonians 5:7
for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night.

I Corinthians 5:11
But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother or sister who is sexually immoral or greedy, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or robber. Do not even eat with such a one.

1 Corinthians 6:9-10
Do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived! Fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, sodomites, thieves, the greedy, drunkards, revilers, robbers-- none of these will inherit the kingdom of God.

Romans 13:13
let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy.

Ephesians 5:18
Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit,

Numbers 6:3-4
they shall separate themselves from wine and strong drink; they shall drink no wine vinegar or other vinegar, and shall not drink any grape juice or eat grapes, fresh or dried. All their days as nazirites they shall eat nothing that is produced by the grapevine, not even the seeds or the skins.

Jeremiah 35:6
But they answered, "We will drink no wine, for our ancestor Jonadab son of Rechab commanded us, 'You shall never drink wine, neither you nor your children;

Luke 1:15
for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Tobacco

We affirm our historic tradition of high standards of personal discipline and social responsibility. In light of the overwhelming evidence that tobacco smoking and the use of smokeless tobacco are hazardous to the health of persons of all ages, we recommend total abstinence from the use of tobacco.

We urge that our educational and communication resources be utilized to support and encourage such abstinence. Further, we recognize the harmful effects of passive smoke and support the restriction of smoking in public areas and workplaces.

Medical Experimentation

Physical and mental health has been greatly enhanced through discoveries by medical science.

It is imperative, however, that governments and the medical profession carefully enforce the requirements of the prevailing medical research standard, maintaining rigid controls in testing new technologies and drugs utilizing human beings.

The standard requires that those engaged in research shall use human beings as research subjects only after obtaining full, rational, and uncoerced consent.

Genetic Technology

The responsibility of humankind to God’s creation challenges us to deal carefully with the possibilities of genetic research and technology. We welcome the use of genetic technology for meeting fundamental human needs for health, a safe environment, and an adequate food supply. We oppose the cloning of humans and the genetic manipulation of the gender of an unborn child.

Because of the effects of genetic technologies on all life, we call for effective guidelines and public accountability to safeguard against any action that might lead to abuse of these technologies, including political or military ends. We recognize that

cautious, well-intended use of genetic technologies may sometimes lead to unanticipated harmful consequences.

Human gene therapies that produce changes that cannot be passed to offspring (somatic therapy) should be limited to the alleviation of suffering caused by disease. Genetic therapies for eugenic choices or that produce waste embryos are deplored.

Genetic data of individuals and their families should be kept secret and held in strict confidence unless confidentiality is waived by the individual or by his or her family, or unless the collection and use of genetic identification data is supported by an appropriate court order. Because its long-term effects are uncertain, we oppose genetic therapy that results in changes that can be passed to offspring (germ-line therapy).

The Social Principles at this point get into matters that this author had little experience or previous thought. In fact, most of what I can do here is to provide some expansion on the terms used. The Book of Resolutions #101-104 discusses further recommendations of the denomination concerning genetic engineering.

The Catholic Church and various traditionalist religious groups oppose all forms of cloning, because life begins at conception. Conversely, Judaism does not equate life with conception and, though some question the wisdom of cloning, Orthodox rabbis generally find no firm reason in Jewish law and ethics to object to cloning. From the standpoint of classical liberalism, concerns also exist regarding the protection of the identity of the individual and the right to protect one's genetic identity.

Roman Catholicism and many conservative Christian groups have opposed human cloning and the cloning of human embryos, believing that life begins at of conception. Other Christian denominations such as the United Church of Christ do not believe a fertilized egg constitutes a living being, but still they oppose the cloning of embryonic cells. The World Council of Churches, representing nearly 400 Christian denominations worldwide, opposed cloning of both human embryos and whole humans in February 2006. The United Methodist Church opposed research and reproductive cloning in May 2000 and again in May 2004. Conversely, Judaism does not equate life

with conception and, though some question the wisdom of cloning, Orthodox rabbis generally find no firm reason in Jewish law and ethics to object to cloning. Liberal Jewish thinkers have cautioned against cloning, among other genetic engineering efforts, though some eye the potential medical advantages.

At present, the main non-religious objection to human cloning is that the cloned individual may be biologically damaged, due to the inherent unreliability of its origin; for example, researchers currently are unable to safely and reliably clone non-human primates.

Many believe that as cloning research and methods improve, concerns of safety and reliability will no longer be an issue. However, it must be pointed out that this has yet to occur. Rudolph Jaenisch, a professor at Harvard, has pointed out that we have become more efficient at producing defective clones. Other arguments against cloning come from various religious orders (believing cloning violates God's will or the natural order of life), and a general discomfort some have with the idea of "meddling" with the creation and basic function of life. This unease often manifests itself in contemporary novels, movies, and popular culture, as it did with numerous prior scientific discoveries and inventions. Various fictional scenarios portray clones being unhappy, soulless, or unable to integrate into society. Furthermore, clones are often depicted not as unique individuals but as "spare parts," providing organs for the clone's original (or any non-clone that requires replacement organs).

Cloning is a poignant and important topic, reflected by its frequent discussion and debate among politicians, scientists, the media, religions, and the public.

On December 28, 2006, the FDA approved eating meat from cloned animals. It was said to be virtually indistinguishable from the non-cloned animals. Furthermore, companies would not be required to provide labels informing the consumer that the meat comes from a cloned animal.

The social implications of an artificial human production scheme were famously explored in the novel *Brave New World* and in the movie *The Island*. These fictional works explore the prejudices that could develop against clones with respect to a kind of slavery or caste system.

The Social Principles refer to somatic therapy. Somatic disciplines are a type of Alternative medicine often referred to as bodywork, body therapies, hands-on work, body-mind integration, body-mind disciplines, movement or dance therapy, somatic therapy, movement awareness or movement education or somatic education. Somatic disciplines that involve movement as a fundamental part of the learning process are part of the field of somatic movement education and therapy.

Followers of somatic therapy believe it enhances movement and sensation, improving function. Generally, it also implies a philosophy of mind and body unity, and some forms utilize a teacher-student rather than a client-practitioner relationship.

The Social Principles refer to gene therapy. Gene therapy is the insertion of genes into an individual's cells and tissues to treat a disease, and hereditary diseases in which a defective mutant allele is replaced with a functional one. Although the technology is still in its infancy, it has been used with some success. Antisense therapy is not strictly a form of gene therapy, but is a genetically-mediated therapy and is often considered together with other methods.

For the safety of gene therapy, the Weismann barrier is fundamental in the current thinking. Soma-to-germline feedback should therefore be impossible. However, there are indications that the Weissman barrier can be breached. One way it might possibly be breached is if the treatment was somehow misapplied and spread to the testes and therefore would infect the germline against the intentions of the therapy.

Some of the problems of gene therapy include:

Short-lived nature of gene therapy - Before gene therapy can become a permanent cure for any condition, the therapeutic DNA introduced into target cells must remain functional and the cells containing the therapeutic DNA must be long-lived and stable. Problems with integrating therapeutic DNA into the genome and the rapidly dividing nature of many cells prevent gene therapy from achieving any long-term benefits. Patients will have to undergo multiple rounds of gene therapy.

Immune response - Anytime a foreign object is introduced into human tissues, the immune system is designed to attack the invader. The risk of stimulating the immune system in a way that reduces gene therapy effectiveness is always a possibility. Furthermore, the immune system's enhanced response to invaders it has seen before makes it difficult for gene therapy to be repeated in patients.

Problems with viral vectors - Viruses, while the carrier of choice in most gene therapy studies, present a variety of potential problems to the patient --toxicity, immune and inflammatory responses, and gene control and targeting issues. In addition, there is always the fear that the viral vector, once inside the patient, may recover its ability to cause disease.

Multigene disorders - Conditions or disorders that arise from mutations in a single gene are the best candidates for gene therapy. Unfortunately, some of the most commonly occurring disorders, such as heart disease, high blood pressure, Alzheimer's disease, arthritis, and diabetes, are caused by the combined effects of variations in many genes. Multigene or multifactorial disorders such as these would be especially difficult to treat effectively using gene therapy.

Chance of inducing a tumor (insertional mutagenesis) - If the DNA is integrated in the wrong place in the genome, for example in a tumor suppressor gene, it could induce a tumor (insertional mutagenesis). This has occurred in clinical trials for X-linked severe combined immunodeficiency (X-SCID) patients, in which hematopoietic stem cells were transduced with a corrective transgene using a retrovirus, and this led to the development of T cell leukemia in 3 of 20 patients.

Deaths have occurred due to gene therapy, including that of Jesse Gelsinger.

The Social Principles refers to eugenic therapy. Eugenics is a social philosophy that advocates the improvement of human hereditary traits through various forms of intervention. The goals of various groups advocating eugenics have been to create healthier, more intelligent people, to save society's resources, and lessen human suffering.

The Social Principles are against medical processes that result in “waste embryos.” However, some would argue that if an embryo is going to be destroyed anyway, isn't it more efficient to make practical use of it? In vitro fertilization (IVF) generates large numbers of unused embryos (e.g. 70,000 in Australia alone).Many of these thousands of IVF embryos are slated for destruction. Using them for scientific research utilizes a resource that the scientific community would otherwise waste. While

the destruction of human embryos is required to establish a stem cell line, no new embryos have to be destroyed to work with existing stem cell lines. It would be wasteful not to continue to make use of these cell lines as a resource. Abortions are legal in many countries and jurisdictions. A logical argument follows that if these embryos are being destroyed anyway, why not use them for stem cell research or treatments?

The Social Principles oppose germ-line therapy. Human genetic engineering refers to the controlled modification of the human genome, which is the genome of Homo sapiens composed of 23 pairs of chromosomes with a total of approximately 3 billion DNA base pairs containing an estimated 30,000 genes. DNA provides the genetic blueprint for all living organisms that influences the physical and mental actions and abilities. With the advent of DNA research and the ability to change gene expressions, scientists may be able to change human capacities, whether they be physical, cognitive, or emotional. Human genetic engineering is still in its infancy, however, with current research generally restricted to animals or gene therapy. In biology and genetics, the germline of a mature or developing individual is the line (sequence) of germ cells that have genetic material that may be passed to a child. For example, sex cells, such as the sperm or the egg, are part of the germline. So are the cells that produce sex cells, called gametocytes, the cells that produce those, called gametogonia, and all the way back to the zygote, the cell from which the individual developed. Cells that are not in the germline are called somatic cells. For example, all cells of the mammalian liver are somatic. If there is a mutation or other genetic change in the germline, it can be passed to offspring, but for a change in a somatic cell it will not be. Germline cells are immortal, in the sense that they can reproduce indefinitely. A special enzyme called telomerase enables this.

This enzyme is dedicated to lengthening the DNA primer of the chromosome, allowing for unending duplication. Somatic cells, by comparison, can only divide around 30-50 times, as they do not contain telomerases. "Germline" can refer to a lineage of cells spanning many generations of individuals; for example, the germline that links any living individual to the hypothetical first eukaryote of about one billion years ago, from which all plants and animals descend. Germline engineering would change genes in eggs, sperm, or very early embryos. This type of engineering is inheritable, meaning that the modified genes would appear not only in any children that resulted from the procedure, but in all succeeding generations. This application is by far the more consequential as it could open the door to the perpetual and irreversible alteration of the human species.

Rural Life

We support the right of persons and families to live and prosper as farmers, farm workers, merchants, professionals, and others outside of the cities and metropolitan centers. We believe our culture is impoverished and our people deprived of a meaningful way of life when rural and small-town living becomes difficult or impossible. We recognize that the improvement of this way of life may sometimes necessitate the use of some lands for nonagricultural purposes. We oppose the indiscriminate diversion of agricultural land for nonagricultural uses when nonagricultural land is available. Further, we encourage the preservation of appropriate lands for agriculture and open space uses through thoughtful land use programs. We support governmental and private programs designed to benefit the resident farmer rather than the factory farm and programs that encourage industry to locate in nonurban areas.

We further recognize that increased mobility and technology have brought a mixture of people, religions, and philosophies to rural communities that were once homogeneous. While often this is seen as a threat to or loss of community life, we understand it as an opportunity to uphold the biblical call to community for all persons. Therefore, we encourage rural communities and individuals to maintain a strong connection to the earth and to be open to: offering mutual belonging, caring, healing, and growth; sharing and celebrating cooperative leadership and diverse gifts; supporting mutual trust; and affirming individuals as unique persons of worth, and thus to practice shalom.

The Social Principles are against the factory farm.

Sustainable Agriculture

A prerequisite for meeting the nutritional needs of the world's population is an agricultural system which uses sustainable methods, respects ecosystems, and promotes a livelihood for people that work the land.

We support a sustainable agricultural system that will maintain and support the natural fertility of agricultural soil, promote the diversity of flora and fauna, and adapt to regional conditions and structures—a system where agricultural animals are treated humanely and where their living conditions are as close to natural systems as possible. We aspire to an effective agricultural system where plant, livestock, and poultry production maintains the natural ecological cycles, conserves energy, and reduces chemical input to a minimum.

Sustainable agriculture requires a global evaluation of the impact of agriculture on food and raw material production, the preservation of animal breeds and plant varieties, and the preservation and development of the cultivated landscape.

World trade of agricultural products needs to be based on fair trade and prices, based on the costs of sustainable production methods, and must consider the real costs of ecological damage. The needed technological and biological developments are those that support sustainability and consider ecological consequences.

Urban-Suburban Life

Urban–suburban living has become a dominant style of life for more and more persons. For many it furnishes economic, educational, social, and cultural opportunities. For others, it has brought alienation, poverty, and depersonalization.

We in the Church have an opportunity and responsibility to help shape the future of urban-suburban life. Massive programs of renewal and social planning are needed to bring a greater degree of humanization into urban–suburban lifestyles.

Christians must judge all programs, including economic and community development, new towns, and urban renewal, by the extent to which they protect and enhance human values, permit personal and political involvement, and make possible neighborhoods open to persons of all races, ages, and income levels. We affirm the efforts of all developers who place human values at the heart of their planning.

We must help shape urban–suburban development so that it provides for the human need to identify with and find meaning in smaller social communities. At the same time, such smaller communities must be encouraged to assume responsibilities for the total urban–suburban community instead of isolating themselves from it.

The Social Principles believe “massive programs of renewal and social planning” are needed to bring humanization into the urban and suburban lifestyles. The basis for evaluating such programs is the extent to which they “enhance human values.” Such programs are to “permit personal and social involvement.” Such programs are to “make possible neighborhoods open to persons of all races, ages, and income levels.” The hope of the church is that developers will place “human values” at the heart of their planning. The hope of the church is that it will help shape “smaller social communities” in which people may find meaning. Yet, such smaller communities will continue to care for the total urban community.

Urban renewal (also called urban regeneration in British English) is a process of land re-development in areas of previous moderate to high density urban land use. In Europe and the United States this process began an intense phase in the late 1940s and continued at least through the 1980s. It has had a major impact on the urban landscape of many world cities. It continues to do so in the present day.

Some of the policies around urban renewal began to change under President Lyndon Johnson and the War on Poverty, and in 1968, the Housing and Urban Development Act and The New Communities Act of 1968 guaranteed private financing for private entrepreneurs to plan and develop new communities. Subsequently, the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 established the Community Development Block Grant program (CDBG) which began in earnest the focus on redevelopment of existing neighborhoods and properties, rather than demolition of substandard housing and economically depressed areas.

Currently, a mix of renovation, selective demolition, commercial development, and tax incentives is most often used to revitalize urban neighborhoods. Though not without its critics—gentrification is still controversial, and often results in familiar patterns of poorer residents being priced out of urban areas into suburbs or more depressed areas of cities—urban renewal in its present form is generally regarded as a great improvement over the policies of the middle part of the 20th century. Some programs, such as that administered by Fresh Ministries and Operation New Hope in Jacksonville, Florida attempt to develop communities, while at the same time combining highly favorable loan programs with financial literacy education so that poorer residents may still be able to afford their restored neighborhoods. Other programs, such as that in Castleford in the UK and known as The Castleford Project seek to establish a process of urban renewal that enables local citizens to have greater control and ownership of the direction of their community and the way in which it overcomes market failure. This supports important themes in urban renewal today, such as participation, sustainability and trust - and government acting as advocate and 'enabler', rather than an instrument of command and control.

During the 1990s, the concept of culture-led regeneration gained ground. Examples most often cited as successes include Temple Bar in Dublin where tourism was attracted to a bohemian 'cultural quarter', Barcelona where the 1992 Olympics provided a catalyst for infrastructure improvements and the redevelopment of the water front area, and Bilbao where the building of a new art museum was the focus for a new business district around the city's derelict dock area. The approach has become very popular in the UK due to the availability of lottery funding for capital projects and the vibrancy of the

cultural and creative sectors. However, while the arrival of Tate Modern in the London borough of Southwark may be heralded as a catalyst to economic revival in its surrounding neighborhood, some civic authorities in the UK - for instance Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Gateshead have been accused of investing in cultural facilities at the cost of other programs and projects.

Media Violence and Christian Values

The unprecedented impact the media (principally television and movies) are having on Christian and human values within our society becomes more apparent each day. We express disdain at current media preoccupation with dehumanizing portrayals, sensationalized through mass media "entertainment" and "news." These practices degrade humankind and violate the teachings of Christ and the Bible.

United Methodists, along with those of other faith groups, must be made aware that the mass media often undermine the truths of Christianity by promoting permissive lifestyles and detailing acts of graphic violence. Instead of encouraging, motivating, and inspiring its audiences to adopt lifestyles based on the sanctity of life, the entertainment industry often advocates the opposite, painting a cynical picture of violence, abuse, greed, profanity, and a constant denigration of the family. The media must be held accountable for the part they play in the decline of values we observe in society today. Many in the media remain aloof to the issue, claiming to reflect rather than to influence society. For the sake of our human family, Christians must work together to halt this erosion of moral and ethical values in the world community by:

1) encouraging local congregations to support and encourage parental responsibility to monitor their children’s viewing and listening habits on TV, movies, radio and the Internet,

2) encouraging local congregations, parents and individuals to express their opposition to the gratuitous portrayal of violent and sexually indecent shows by writing to the stations that air them and the companies that sponsor them,

3) encouraging individuals to express their opposition to the corporate sponsors of these shows by the selection and purchase of alternate products.

Information Communication Technology

Because effective personal communication is key to being a responsible and empowered member of society, and because of the power afforded by information communication technologies to shape society and enable individuals to participate more fully, we believe that access to these technologies is a basic right.

Information communication technologies provide us with information, entertainment, and a voice in society. They can be used to enhance our quality of life and

provide us with a means to interact with each other, our government, and people and cultures all over the world. Most information about world events comes to us by the broadcast, cable, print media, and the Internet. Concentrating the control of media to large commercial interests limits our choices and often provides a distorted view of human values. Therefore, we support the regulation of media communication technologies to ensure a variety of independent information sources and provides for the public good.

Personal communication technologies such as the Internet allow persons to communicate with each other and access vast information resources that can have commercial, cultural, political, and personal value. While the Internet can be used to nurture minds and spirits of children and adults, it is in danger of being overrun with commercial interests and is used by some to distribute inappropriate and illegal material. Therefore, the Internet must be managed responsibly in order to maximize its benefits while minimizing its risks, especially for children. Denying access in today's world to basic information communication technologies like the Internet due to their cost or availability, limits people's participation in their government and society. We support the goal of universal access to telephone and Internet services at an affordable price.

Revised, august 2007 - Because effective personal communication is key to being a responsible and empowered member of society, and because of the power afforded by information communication technologies to shape society and enable individuals to participate more fully, we encourage everyone to educate themselves to their use.

Information communication technologies provide us with information, entertainment, and a voice in society. They can be used to enhance our quality of life and provide us with a means to interact with each other, our government, and people and cultures all over the world. Most information about world events comes to us by the broadcast, cable, print media, and the Internet. We recognize that all of these sources of information will need to find their way to economic viability. Our primary concern is with government intervention into the marketplace of information, recognizing that government will always use information to advance its purposes, rather than that of the public.

The Social Principles oppose the concentration of information into corporate interests. They support the government regulation of media so that corporations do not manipulate media. They call for the management of the Internet to maximize its benefits and minimize its risks, with special attention to children. They support the universal access to telephone and Internet services at an affordable price.

Persons Living with HIV and AIDS

Persons diagnosed as positive for Human Immune Virus (HIV) and with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) often face rejection from their families and friends and various communities in which they work and interact. In addition, they are often faced with a lack of adequate health care, especially toward the end of life.

All individuals living with HIV and AIDS should be treated with dignity and respect.

We affirm the responsibility of the Church to minister to and with these individuals and their families regardless of how the disease was contracted. We support their rights to employment, appropriate medical care, full participation in public education, and full participation in the Church.

We urge the Church to be actively involved in the prevention of the spread of AIDS by providing educational opportunities to the congregation and the community. The Church should be available to provide counseling to the affected individuals and their families.

Right to Health Care

Health is a condition of physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being, and we view it as a responsibility—public and private. Health care is a basic human right. Psalm 146 speaks of the God "who executes justice for the oppressed;/ who gives food to the hungry./ The LORD sets the prisoners free;/ the LORD opens the eyes of the blind." The right to health care includes care for persons with brain diseases, neurological conditions or physical disabilities, who must be afforded the same access to health care as all other persons in our communities. It is unjust to construct or perpetuate barriers to physical or mental wholeness or full participation in community.

We encourage individuals to pursue a healthy lifestyle and affirm the importance of preventive health care, health education, environmental and occupational safety, good nutrition, and secure affordable housing in achieving health. We also recognize the role of governments in ensuring that each individual has access to those elements necessary to good health. Countries facing a public health crisis such as HIV/AIDS must have access to generic medicines and to patented medicines without infringing on a pharmaceutical company's patent/licensing rights. We affirm the right of men and women to have access to comprehensive reproductive health/family planning information and services which will serve as a means to prevent unplanned pregnancies, reduce abortions and prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS.

The Social Principles encourage individuals to pursue healthy lifestyles. Our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit. God made us with these bodies. We have a responsibility to care for our total health and well-being.

The Social Principles also argue that the public, through the government and taxation, has a responsibility to provide health care as a "basic human right." Book of

Resolutions # 108 specifically identifies the private health insurance approach as a failed system and calls for a nonprofit health care insurance system, a single-payer system administered by the federal government. It further urges the adoption of H. R. 1200, the McDermott Bill, also entitled the American Health Security Act of 1995. The Book of Resolutions #113 calls for universal access to health care. The Social Principles considers it "unjust to construct or perpetuate barriers to physical or mental wholeness or full participation in community." The Social Principles "recognize the role of governments in ensuring that each individual has access to those elements necessary to good health." #282 supports the combining of other federal health insurance programs into a single-payer federal program for the nation.

Organ Transplantation and Donation

We believe that organ transplantation and organ donation are acts of charity, agape love, and self-sacrifice. We recognize the life-giving benefits of organ and other tissue donation and encourage all people of faith to become organ and tissue donors as a part of their love and ministry to others in need.

We urge that it be done in an environment of respect for deceased and living donors and for the benefit of the recipients, and following protocols that carefully prevent abuse to donors and their families.

The Economic Community and Promotion of the General Welfare

The economic community reflects human creation by God in their freedom, creativity, worth, dignity, and moral discernment. The economic community also reflects the fallen nature of humanity in social structures that block full participation in economic life and in personal behaviors that inhibit the fulfillment of individual potential.

Governments have the responsibility of providing sound fiscal and monetary policies that promote low inflation.

Governments must recognize that freedom and creativity vary from individual to individual, and thus that wealth distribution will vary.

Respect for the property of citizens is one of the ways the governments demonstrate their respect for their citizens. Governments have a limited right to subsume private property to the good of society.

Respect for the relationship between owners of businesses and their employees includes collective bargaining arrangements, considering the fact that they rely upon each other and are in competition with each other.

In a free society, fairness suggests that all persons have access to work, without suggesting that they have a right to work. Therefore, governments have no responsibility to provide work for its citizens.

Leisure and play are as important as work in the development of human potential.

One important moral choice of citizens in a free society is the way in which they spend the wealth they accumulate. Materialism, greed, and envy lead to moral and spiritual sickness. Although the producers of goods and services will do what they can to sell what they offer, citizens have increasing responsibility to make wise and moral choices.

Poverty can be the result of unjust social structures. Where this is the case, laws must change. Poverty can be the result of personal and cultural habits. Where this is the case, one must deal with the moral and spiritual habits that lead to poverty.

Migrant workers who are in the United States deserve the same respect due to any human being.

Gambling, even if legal, is not a behavior that instills the value of work and personal discipline.

Farming will undergo lifestyle changes due to technology to which society will need to adjust. These changes include arrangements other than the family farm.

Corporations have responsibility to their stockholders, of course, but they also have responsibility to workers in terms of working conditions and wages, to the communities in which they conduct their business, and to the consumer of their goods and services.

The goal of free trade among nations is worthy, creating cooperation and competition that can lead to an increasingly peaceful world.

Biblical passages

Jeremiah 22:3 (NRSV)

[3] Thus says the Lord: Act with justice and righteousness, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor anyone who has been robbed. And do no wrong or violence to the alien, the orphan, and the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place.
Jeremiah 22:15-16 (NRSV)
[15] Are you a king
because you compete in cedar?
Did not your father eat and drink
and do justice and righteousness?
Then it was well with him.
[16] He judged the cause of the poor and needy;
then it was well.
Is not this to know me?
says the Lord.
Micah 6:8 (NRSV)
[8] He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?
Amos 5:24 (NRSV)
[24] But let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.
Psalm 72:1-4 (NRSV)
[1] Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to a king's son.
[2] May he judge your people with righteousness,
and your poor with justice.
[3] May the mountains yield prosperity for the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.
[4] May he defend the cause of the poor of the people,
give deliverance to the needy,
and crush the oppressor.
Psalm 82:3-4 (NRSV)
[3] Give justice to the weak and the orphan;
maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute.
[4] Rescue the weak and the needy;
deliver them from the hand of the wicked."
Deuteronomy 1:16-17 (NRSV)
[16] I charged your judges at that time: "Give the members of your community a fair hearing, and judge rightly between one person and another, whether citizen or resident alien. [17] You must not be partial in judging: hear out the small and the great alike; you shall not be intimidated by anyone, for the judgment is God's. Any case that is too hard for you, bring to me, and I will hear it."
Isaiah 11:3-4 (NRSV)
[3] His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear;
4 but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
Job 31 (NRSV) – selected verses
13 "If I have rejected the cause of my male or female slaves,
when they brought a complaint against me;
14 what then shall I do when God rises up?
When he makes inquiry, what shall I answer him?
16 "If I have withheld anything that the poor desired,
or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail,
17 or have eaten my morsel alone,
and the orphan has not eaten from it—
19 if I have seen anyone perish for lack of clothing,
or a poor person without covering,
20 whose loins have not blessed me,
and who was not warmed with the fleece of my sheep;
21 if I have raised my hand against the orphan,
because I saw I had supporters at the gate;
22 then let my shoulder blade fall from my shoulder,
and let my arm be broken from its socket.
29 "If I have rejoiced at the ruin of those who hated me,
or exulted when evil overtook them—
31 if those of my tent ever said,
'O that we might be sated with his flesh!' —
32 the stranger has not lodged in the street;
I have opened my doors to the traveler—
35 O that I had one to hear me!
(Here is my signature! Let the Almighty answer me!)
O that I had the indictment written by my adversary!

The cultural context of the prophetic concern for justice lays in the abuse of power by kings, who receive their office by hereditary right. The prophet himself sought no power in society, a fact lost on the Social Gospel Movement and its quest to Christianize the social order through gaining political power. Given the emphasis of the Old Testament on covenant, the king has obligations to fulfill his part of the covenant to God and to the people. Most of the people are poor because of the economic system that keeps them poor. The system allowed little room for advancement in any modern sense of that term. As modern persons looking back, we can see the deficiency of freedom that pre-modern societies took for granted. We can also see the endless oppression due to the lack of respect for the rights of individuals that seems part of their way of life. The prophets and the Torah unite at the point of demonstrating the concern God has for the abuse of power and wealth at the expense of the masses. However, we also note several other rather conservative trends. The prophets do not call for the overthrow of the office

of king or priest. With all of their concern for justice and the warning of judgment if the king fails, the prophets do not have a specific economic, social, or economic agenda other than faithfulness to the covenant. The prophets never sought political or economic gain for themselves. Although the Law demonstrates compassion toward women and slaves, neither the Law nor the prophets call for outlawing slavery or the elevation of the social position of women.

Wisdom recommends the discipline of work.

> Do not love sleep, or else you will come to poverty;
> open your eyes, and you will have plenty of bread. (20:13 A)
> In all toil there is profit,
> but mere talk leads only to poverty. (14:23 A)
> One who is slack in work
> is close kin to a vandal. (18:9 A)
> Know well the condition of your flocks,
> and give attention to your herds;
> for riches do not last forever,
> nor a crown for all generations.
> When the grass is gone, and new growth appears,
> and the herbage of the mountains is gathered,
> the lambs will provide your clothing,
> and the goats the price of a field;
> there will be enough goats' milk for your food,
> for the food of your household
> and nourishment for your servant girls. (27:23-27 A)
> Wealth hastily gotten will dwindle,
> but those who gather little by little will increase it. (13:11 A)

Wisdom recommends the path that avoids greed.

> Sheol and Abaddon are never satisfied,
> and human eyes are never satisfied. (27:20 A)

Wisdom recognizes the realities of wealth and poverty.

> The wealth of the rich is their fortress;
> the poverty of the poor is their ruin. (10:15 A)
> Some pretend to be rich, yet have nothing;
> others pretend to be poor, yet have great wealth. (13:7 A)
> Wealth brings many friends,
> but the poor are left friendless. (19:4 A)
> The poor are disliked even by their neighbors,
> but the rich have many friends. (14:20 A)
> If the poor are hated even by their kin,
> how much more are they shunned by their friends!

When they call after them, they are not there. (19:7 A)
All the days of the poor are hard,
but a cheerful heart has a continual feast. (15:15 A)

The Lord has several concerns about work, wealth, and poverty.

Those who trust in their riches will wither,
but the righteous will flourish like green leaves. (11:28 C)
Riches do not profit in the day of wrath,
but righteousness delivers from death. (11:4 C)
Better is a little with the fear of the Lord
than great treasure and trouble with it. (15:16 C)
Better is a little with righteousness
than large income with injustice. (16:8 C)
Better the poor walking in integrity
than one perverse of speech who is a fool. (19: 1 C)
Better to be poor and walk in integrity
than to be crooked in one's ways even though rich. (28:6 C)
Honest balances and scales are the Lord's;
all the weights in the bag are his work. (16:11 C)
A false balance is an abomination to the Lord,
but an accurate weight is his delight. (11:1 C)
Diverse weights and diverse measures
are both alike an abomination to the Lord. (20:10 C)
Differing weights are an abomination to the Lord,
and false scales are not good. (20:23 C)
The unjust are an abomination to the righteous,
but the upright are an abomination to the wicked. (29:27 C)
Treasure gained by wickedness do not profit,
but righteousness delivers from death. (10:2 C)
The miser is in a hurry to get rich
and does not know that loss is sure to come. (28:22 C)
The greedy person stirs up strife,
but whoever trusts in the Lord will be enriched. (28:25 C)
Those who are greedy for unjust gain make trouble for their households,
but those who hate bribes will live. (15:27 C)
The rich and the poor have this in common:
the Lord is the maker of them all. (22:2 C)
The poor and the oppressor have this in common:
the Lord gives light to the eyes of both. (29:13 C)
Oppressing the poor in order to enrich oneself,
and giving to the rich, will lead only to loss. (22:16 C)
One who augments wealth by exorbitant interest
gathers it for another who is kind to the poor. (28:8 C)
Those who mock the poor insult their Maker;
those who are glad at calamity will not go unpunished. (17:5 C)

The righteous know the rights of the poor;
the wicked have no such understanding. (29:7 C)
Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord,
and will be repaid in full. (19:17 C)
Whoever gives to the poor will lack nothing,
but one who turns a blind eye will get many a curse. (28:27 C)

As part of his ethical instruction, Jesus adopted a casual approach to economics, thereby refusing to become indebted to the economic and political system of his day. By not feeling the need to protect what they had, Jesus took every material means of manipulating and imposing oneself on Jesus and his first followers out of their enemies' hands. Such injunctions as follows were smart moves under the circumstances. Such counsel is a subversive wisdom. Such a deviation from established patterns in society is an attempt to upset the social order or disorder created by these patterns of both thought and action.

The social situation in which Jesus found himself suggested a relaxed attitude toward wealth. The governing class, for example, was one percent of the population but received 25% of the national income. The retainer class averaged around 5% of the population and ranged from scribes and bureaucrats to soldiers and generals. Their function was to serve the political elite. The upper classes viewed the peasant classes with suspicion, largely because the upper classes allowed them to have the necessities of life, and that was all. With necessities provided, this large class, comprising as much as 65% of the population, would not rebel. The society vested economic and political power in about 6% of the population. There was little hope of moving into that elite. Normally one was born into it. Thus, what Jesus said and did in regard to wealth was a form of resistance to the dominant social institutions of the day. Jesus and his followers are not indebted to this world, opening the possibility of normally inconceivable options for dealing with evil and injustice that the Jewish people faced.

"Give to everyone who begs from you..." (Luke 6:30) is a rule that if followed would lead to impoverishment. Sparrows are cared for by God, people are worth far more than they (Luke 12:6).

> Luke 12:6 (NRSV)
> [6] Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten in God’s sight.

"Don't fret about life." God provides for the birds. God takes care of nature. So will you be provided for (Luke l2:22-28). Philippians (60-62 from a prison in Rome) 4:6, "Have no anxiety about anything ..." suggests that Paul has some awareness of the following saying.

> Luke 12:22-28 (NRSV)
> [22] “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. [23] For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. [24] Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of

how much more value are you than the birds! [25] And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? [26] If then you are not able to do so small a thing as that, why do you worry about the rest? [27] Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. [28] But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith!

The burden of wealth ought not to afflict the followers of Jesus at all. "Sell your belongings, and donate to charity..." (Luke 12:33). Wealth gets in the way of serving God totally: "No servant can be a slave to two masters. No doubt that slave will either hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You can't be enslaved to God and a bank account" (Luke 16:13). His charge to one person was simple: "You are missing one thing. Make your move, sell whatever you have and give the proceeds to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. And then come, follow me!" (Mk 10:21) In fact, "What good does it do a person to acquire the whole world and pay for it with life?" (Mk 8:36) In this world, there is only one way to be: "Become passersby" (Thomas 42). It happens all the time. The rich think only of themselves, while the poor are all around them (Luke 16:19-26).

Luke 16:19-26 (NRSV)
[19] "There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. [20] And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, [21] who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man's table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. [22] The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. [23] In Hades, where he was being tormented, he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. [24] He called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in agony in these flames.' [25] But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. [26] Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us.'

A rich person often thinks only of themselves, and rarely of their eternal destiny (Thomas 63:1-3, Luke 12:16-21).

Luke 12:16-21 (NRSV)
[16] "The land of a rich man produced abundantly. [17] And he thought to himself, 'What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?' [18] Then he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. [19] And I will say to my

> soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.' [20] But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' [21] So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God."

Further, "How difficult it is for those who have money to enter the kingdom of God" (Mk 10:23). "It's easier for a camel to squeeze through a needle's eye than for a wealthy person to get into the kingdom of God" (Mk 10:25).

Jesus has this relaxed this attitude toward wealth because his own vision of happiness is not placed in the economic hierarchical system created by Roman civic action. Rather, "Whoever tries to hang on to life will forfeit it, but whoever forfeits life will preserve it" (Luke 17:33). "What would a person give in exchange for life?" (Mk 8:37) Death is the great equalizer. All too many do not consider the ethical power of death. After all, "I tell you, on that night there will be two on the couch: one will be taken and the other left. There will be two women grinding together: one will be taken, the other left" (Luke 17:34).

We need to balance this attitude toward wealth with the many images that Jesus used from the business world of his day. The merchant class, though it could gain enough to wealth to gain a moderate degree of power, in general was only slightly wealthier than the peasant was. This was the one path for the peasant to get out of subsistence living. They confronted the upper classes because of the market rather than politics or the military. For example, A wealthy person invites people to his dinner party, but is turned down, so others are "forced" to come in so that the house will be filled (Luke 14:16-23). A wealthy man leaves three slaves in charge of money, two of whom invest their money, and of whom buries it (Matthew 25:14-27). A wealthy man gives the younger son his inheritance long before he was required to (Luke 15:11-32). A rich man had a manager whom he accused of squandering his money (Luke 16:1-8). A wealthy man settled accounts with his slaves, forgave one 10 million dollars, yet that same slave could not forgive someone else only $100 (Matthew 18:23-34). A wealthy Samaritan helped a Jew who was beaten and robbed (Luke 10:30-35). The kingdom of God is like a trader looking for beautiful pearls (Matthew 13:45-46), or like a proprietor who hired people at different times of the day, yet paid all the same (Matthew 20:1-15). The unexpected coming of divine intervention will be like the wealthy person who puts slaves in charge, each with a task, and each expected to keep alert (Matthew 13:34-36). That Jesus used such images suggests he was more acquainted with business dealings than some have thought.

Moral basis of capitalism

My objective throughout this reflection upon economic life is to show how a free society is a proper and moral economic home that free individuals can enjoy. Such a home is not perfect or smooth. Its imperfections lead us to question the value of the

freedoms citizens enjoy. I will begin with discussing the moral basis of capitalism and some of its intellectual foundations. I will then take each of its principle components, as I see them, and show why they work, not perfectly, but in a quite human way. My intent is to show that much of the alienation participants in a capitalist society experience is a result of a failure to think the matter through intellectually or to accept the imperfections that any human society will express. A capitalist economic system is not utopia, for human beings have created it. I will conclude this section with some of the ways in which real, objective alienation occurs within capitalism, and some of the ways in which a free society can deal with them.

The free society entrusts the future of the nation in the hands of free decisions of individuals, as they choose their values, their careers, their families, their charitableness to the poor, their voluntary association with others of like mind and heart and interest, whether in political, religious, or other communities. Some will abuse their freedom and adopt self-destructive courses of action. Behaviors like abortion, pornography, prostitution, gambling, alcoholism and other forms of drug abuse, fall into this category, as do the abuse of business practices and the inappropriate use of wealth. Yet, freedom still seems to be the best way, even with such risks.

Before I go too far, I recognize that "unfettered capitalism" has probably never existed, never should exist, and in a human world, will always need correctives from government. Adam Smith, in *The Wealth of Nations*, suggested that one of the key roles of government is administer justice, making sure that one citizen does not oppress another. Where businesses do not see the harm they do, such as in practices that harm the natural environment, in practices that harm the social fabric (sexism, racism,

discrimination based on sexual orientation), in poor conditions for workers, and in practices that unfairly inhibit competition in the market place, political leaders will need to act in order to help them see. As Smith put it, when one citizen oppresses another, the government needs to stop it. Discussion of economics does not occur in a vacuum. I cannot abstract it from its social and political context and do it justice. Governments have an important role in establishing a legal structure that supports the growth of a market economy. Governments also have an important role in promoting social justice and maintaining peace with neighbors. On the negative side, a government obsessed with imposing religious law (Sharia Law in Islam), or a government obsessed with obliterating a tribe or ethnic group (as occurs in eastern Europe or in Africa), or a culture devoted to maintaining tribal relationships (Saudi Arabia), rules a country not ready for free enterprise. Adam Smith was more aware than many of his successors have been in recognizing the indebtedness of capitalism to the political, legal, and cultural setting within which capitalism takes place. According to Joseph E. Stiglitz, the experience of Russia is an example of privatizing the economy before it had the legal structure to support it, resulting in the empowering of former Communist Party bosses and the imposition of a mafia style economy and government. The same experience occurs today in China, where the façade of capitalism hides the mafia-like Communist Party bosses of certain sectors of the economic system.

At the same time, I will need to focus upon the virtues of capitalism and free enterprise. The misunderstandings into which many people fall, even with its proponents, often blur the moral basis of capitalism. Capitalism would not be a worthy economic system if it did not legitimate itself in human nature and morality.

In what follows, I will side with Marvin Olaskey and many others, represented in the Villars Statement on Relief and Development, and against the views of Jim Wallis and Tony Campolo in their Call to Renewal. Since the views of Wallis and Campolo are available readily, I will present, in my own way, an understanding of economic growth and concern for the poor that relies upon capitalist, democratic, and cultural values that respect the principle of liberty. From the perspective of philosophical history, what I present is in general agreement, I hope, with John Locke and Adam Smith, especially as seen through the eyes of Milton Freedman. It would be in general disagreement, I think, with the Social Gospel movement, John Maynard Keyes and John Dewey.

Because of creation in the image of God, humanity receives freedom, creativity, worth, dignity, and moral discernment. This dimension of the covenant of God with humanity is covenant rooted in the gift of life that God offers to each human being. What individuals do with this gift, the way in which they exercise proper stewardship of this gift, is, in part, an answer to the question of what they should do (a moral question) with their lives. Part of their answer to that question is a question of vocation. An economic system that builds upon these principles will be most in line with humanity known as creatures whom God has made. However, the economic order participates in the general fallen quality of all human constructions. Every economic order has sinful qualities to it. Therefore, humanity will not find the solution to economic realities like hunger and deprivation only in economics. Economic suffering has a spiritual quality to it. Human rebellion against God will lead to the formation of social and economic structures that result in greater or lesser degrees of human suffering. Any Christian reflection upon economic relief and development will need to address the moral and spiritual dimension,

as well as the structural dimension, of a culture. The point of social transformation, however, is not “sinful social structures,” but the sinful human choices that perpetuate human suffering and injustice.

I share the concern of other Christian authors that the quite Christian compassion for the poor leads some to collectivist, sate-determined, and thinly veiled socialism. Some will not use the term. However, the net effect of their arguments questions the legitimacy of corporations, the unequal distribution of wealth, the market system of competition and pricing, the value of the division of labor, the importance of private property, and the importance of low taxes. The attraction of collectivism has its foundation in the myth of the utopian vision. After all, any honest examination of economics recognizes the failure of economies that surrender so much of the economy to politicians rather than distributing economic decisions over market forces of producers, workers, and consumers. The chaos of the market is preferable to the static decisions of politicians and central planners. The denigration of the market system that results in corporate structures is similar to the same group of Christians who denigrate the American military. Such a utopian vision of peace and economic equality will not be in any human world, but the romanticism of such a vision often leads to faulty decisions. Capitalism has better results, but it cannot compete with the romantic vision of socialism. Peace in this world through strength has better results, but unilateral disarmament will always have its appeal. I also wonder if such economic and political utopianism is a replacement of ideology for genuine faith in God, but that is another story.

Free, democratic, and capitalist civilization appears to have little to do with moral considerations. It appears to deal only with the profit. I am confident that some would

consider any discussion of moral life in capitalism as impossible. What I would like to do now is discuss the form of life in which capitalism engages and the moral life that arises out of it. However, I will admit that what I have to say here will seem hopelessly naïve to some. The evidence suggests that popular wisdom has been right in three respects: #1--People respond to incentives and disincentives. #2--People are not inherently hard working or moral. In the absence of countervailing influences, people will avoid work and be amoral. #3--People must be held responsible for their actions. Individuals need to accept the consequences of their own actions. True social work, absent public force, is the laboratory of creativity. When the government takes over such activity, it results in great evil.

Here is another reality. Society tends to have hostility toward its greatest benefactors, the producers of wealth. Many people want wealth in the nation without the apparent embarrassment of an economic class we can label as "rich." Bluntly, people hesitate to believe in capitalism. With derision, we call it "trickle down" economics. We do not want to accept the enriching mysteries of inequality, or the inexhaustible mines of the division of labor. Any other group in society cannot do the risk-bearing role that the rich play as effectively. The harsh reality is that the bottom of the economic ladder does not create wealth. To put it graphically, none of us would go to a poor person and ask for a job. Rather, we go to those who have generated wealth. They then foster opportunities for the classes below them. People find it difficult to believe in the multiplying miracles of market economics or the compounding gains from trade and property. It is far easier to see the masters of these works as evil and hunt them down like witches. The United

States is the most upwardly mobile society in history. Yet, rage against the wealthy is still an idea that works with many people and politicians.

American writers often mention the division of Americans into various ethnic, racial, gender, and economic classes. The challenge this division ought to present to those of us who care about public discourse is that such identification with a group can obscure the common human bond we share in this country and on this earth.

The African American community has experienced a persistent form of alienation from modern society in America. This fact disguises the rise in income of many other racial minorities since the Civil War, suggesting that something different has happened to that racial group that did not occur in others. The continuing charges that poverty and slavery keep African-Americans down is not consistent with the experience of other racial minorities rising out of poverty. Not only does this approach denigrate white people, it assumes that African-Americans are helpless to face their future with confidence. The fact of persistent alienation within the African American community also disguises the fact that one part of that community has improved substantially - in tact black families.

Thomas Sowell, in *Black Rednecks and White Liberals,* (2005), has shown conclusively that the southern redneck culture is one that avoids a work ethic, valuing work only as a means to a leisurely life. The white culture prior to the civil war practiced slavery for that reason. After the civil war, even with freedom, the southern black absorbed the southern white redneck attitude toward work. The difference with the northern white culture, and the free black people who lived among them, is striking. Part of his point is that this culture has resisted the changes in an attitude that capitalism

requires. The coming of the welfare state has made the needed changes in attitude toward work harder to put into effect. In other subgroups within a society often need to make changes internal to that subculture. Their poverty may be the result of the values of the subculture, rather than the result of oppression. He makes the point that the intellectual language of oppressor and victim will blind the poor as a group from making the changes they need to make. An example is the Irish. The first generation, toward the end of the 1800's, often saw signs that said, "Irish need not apply." The fact that owners did not display such signs a generation or two later was not so much the recognition of oppression but the recognition of the internal cultural changes underwent by the Irish in America. An important part of his point is that our respect for differing cultures must not blind us to the changes cultures need to make in order to expand political and economic liberty.

Most economic fallacies originate in the intellectual mistake of imagining an economically fixed pie. In this view, one party can gain only at the expense of another. This view is directly against the view of Adam Smith. He argued that government should resist the temptation to interfere in the economic interactions of producers, consumers, and workers. Of course, government must establish a system of justice that does not allow one citizen to do harm to another, and punishes them if they do. Economic activity involves citizens focusing upon their self-interest. They engage in market exchanges because of the mutual benefit they receive. No one, especially not government, intentionally thinks of what is best for society. Yet, people engaged in these market exchanges, with no thought of doing what is best for all, end up improving society. Adam Smith called referred to this an "invisible hand." Therefore, any oppressive interference

in the form of regulation, taxation, or political central planning with free competition is almost certain to be injurious. The need to resort to an “invisible hand” should have been a clue to Smith that the economy does not work like a machine. Human beings engage in economic activity. Therefore, it will not run as smoothly as a machine. Healthy economic activity will always have a mysterious quality to it, for no one person or small group of people would have the knowledge to make it work.

Capitalism is often a destructive, disruptive force that breaks apart traditional loyalties and obligations. It also creates order and builds new norms. I hope I can show that capitalism is a net creator of norms and a net moralizing force in free societies. The thrust of social order in free societies is that decentralized groups of people will tend to produce order if left to their own devices. My contention is that a free and capitalist system is a web of ideas and feelings consistent with the process of human knowing, which must always remain open ended and experimental, rather than static and absolute. Human language grows by people borrowing from other languages, testing new words, and even trying new forms. It has a mysterious quality, for no one person has enough knowledge to determine the growth of language. Multiple people make those decisions as they interact with each other. The growth of science is similar, as scientists test new theories, developing experiments to test their validity. The norms, rules, and criteria that emerge in free societies are always experimental in the lives of its people and open to future changes. It operates in an intellectual and psychological arena. Free enterprise takes its direction from the whims and fancies of everyone within society. It depends upon creativity and appears less stable. Political freedoms and economic freedoms come

together, but they also require the formation of values and a legal structure that ensures that citizens cannot do harm to each other without consequences.

If one could wave a magic wand, the best way to increase the health and well-being of the poor throughout world is to impose the social world called liberal democracy, to recognize the worth and dignity of each individual within that social world, and to provide the freedom necessary for people to pursue their best plan of life. Of course, one cannot "impose" such a system, for the culture must undergo a change that will support the expansion of political and economic freedom. Communism failed in Europe and Russia because it was not a moral system. Therefore, it could not create a social world that valued what individuals could produce.

Some critics of capitalism call for a re-definition of violence so that it includes any violation of human dignity and rights, and therefore any exploitation of the poor. I might applaud the intention. If any citizen does harm to another, the government must step in, through its legal system, and stop it. Yet, such a suggestion lessens in our minds the horrible nature of damage to the bodies of others. Sharia law allows personal vengeance if someone dishonors a family. Such vengeance can include death. By contrast, if one examines the life of the poor in liberal democracies, one discovers that many of them would lead at least middle class lives in other types of systems.

I have mentioned the importance of values in sustaining a free society. This area is one that capitalist economists do not often discuss. However, we need to realize that people tend to act out of custom and habit, regardless of whether it is in their rational self-interest to do so. My debatable proposition is that democracy and capitalism work best when leavened with cultural traditions that arise from non-enlightenment sources. A

reasonable analysis of the economic system generated by capitalism and the political system generated by democracy cannot be a philosophical abstraction. They are neither simply economic nor political systems. One has to consider whether the cultural history and values are such that will support political and economic freedom. The wisdom of the ancients, whether in Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddha, Hinduism, or Confucius, has rich resources that enable the masses of people to lead their lives and interact with each other. Therefore, the modern, free society and tradition can coexist in a stable equilibrium for extended periods. In fact, the most successful forms of democratic and capitalist societies are not fully modern. Secular, scientific, democratic, and free enterprise culture, far from replacing traditional virtue of a culture, appears to need those virtues.

I would suggest that religious and ethical communities have an important contribution to make in fashioning the social world increasingly into a hospitable home for humanity. Religion in particular can be part of this process by reminding modern people that life is more than what they possess or achieve. The meaning of life is far more than what one accomplishes by the time of death, for individuals have invested themselves in individuals and causes throughout their lives. Therefore, the religious reminder of the eternal and infinite is as important today as it was in ancient times. In fact, such a hope and faith in the future is an appropriate context for religious moral reflection. Although a perversion of this emphasis would result in denigrating the importance of this time and this space, it can also appropriately set individual human life in a larger context of meaning. The temptation in modern society to cling to people and things can benefit from the emphasis in religion upon the eternal and infinite.

The hesitation to believe in capitalism: intellectual framework

People hesitate to believe in capitalism. Individual hesitation arises from the increasing complexity of modern societies and especially modern economics. Modern society is not the pre-modern village of the family farm and the family owned business. Even though most people benefit in their personal lives from the bigger market, the higher division of labor, the higher productivity of each individual, and the greater wealth individuals receive, they do not want to believe capitalism could rest upon simple and moral foundations. It is easier to trust the owner of the neighborhood store than to trust the international corporation, even though the coming of corporations has improved the lives of so many.

I will need to show that capitalism respects the worth and dignity of individuals and what they own. That fact includes their property.

One reason we hesitate to believe in capitalism is the way in which even its promoters have formed the intellectual discussion. Their tendency is to focus upon the self-interest involved in market exchanges. Instead, I would like to focus upon the qualities involved in the business activity that makes market exchanges possible. Therefore, I would like to consider the way in which giving, love, and sacrifice are central to capitalism.

One piece of wisdom embodied in free enterprise is that the good fortune of others will, eventually become one's own. It is the golden rule, "Do to others as you would have them do to you," translated into economics. In that sense, capitalism is a spirit similar to altruism, in which the entrepreneur has regard for the needs of others, a benevolent, outgoing, and courageous temper of mind. Giving, risking, and creating are the characteristic roles of the capitalist, the key producer of the wealth of nations, from

the least developed to the most advanced. The capitalist appears greedier because money is the result. However, whether one has a business idea or does surgery, the means of receiving wealth is ideas and skills. They need to retain the wealth they earn because only they, not the government, can determine where excess money ought to be channeled. The investor gives money, offers goods, freely, depending on the voluntary willingness of others to respond with creative efforts of their own. The law of reciprocity, that giving and receiving is part of the normal pattern of life, is true for enterprise. Capitalism transforms the gift impulse into a disciplined process of creative investment based on a continuing analysis of the needs of others. The investor cannot be selfish. A truly self-centered capitalist would have to abandon the imaginative understanding of the world beyond the self. Capitalism does not begin with the exchange, but with giving.

Chance is the foundation of change. The world itself is not as rational and predictable as it sometimes appears. Science has the ability to predict the working of nature with amazing accuracy. Yet, for individuals within the system, randomness occurs. Natural disasters and diseases spread rather randomly. It is impossible to foretell who will be the lucky ones or on whom disaster will strike. The world is not rational and predictable, and free enterprise builds upon this reality. Only freedom can prepare us for that future. We must be open to resources beyond the system.

Capitalism succeeds because it accommodates chance and thus accords with the reality of the human situation. The demand for security, inconsistent with the nature of reality and with the process of human knowing, can also become a danger to liberty. One can expect some security from severe physical deprivation or protection against natural hazards or even protection against large-scale economic fluctuations. However, no one

ought to have the security that leads to a given standard of life. One cannot protect people from declines in income that result from the competitive forces of free enterprise. The more security we seek to provide by intervening in the market system, the more insecurity we introduce. As Benjamin Franklin expressed it, "Those who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety." If we seek a rational and predictable world, we also seek hindering material and scientific progress.

The genius of the free enterprise system is the creativity, quality, and leadership of individual entrepreneurs. It adjusts to the realities of chance in human life in ways other economic systems have been unable to do. Society needs to encourage individuals to own their own businesses that buy, sell, and trade goods and services in an open, competitive market based on supply and demand. The creation of wealth is as simple as this: faith and freedom combine with risk and work. The free enterprise belief is that free human beings with faith in the future and a commitment to it will prevail. The world is not rational and predictable, and free enterprise builds upon this reality. Creative thought involves imagination, intuition, and hypotheses as their first steps. It needs faith, love, openness, conflict, and falsifiability.

Most people generate wealth in their minds first. A successful economy needs such risk taking. Such people contribute far more to society than they will ever recover. Many such innovators reap no riches at all. It takes that creative, imaginative person, willing to take risks, to generate economic activity. As a percentage, the number of persons who lead businesses is relatively small. This kind of activity needs to be encouraged, since success is a fragile experience. Wealth is more a product of mind than

of money. However, the government, through regulation and taxation, can inhibit individuals and businesses from accomplishing all the good they can.

This investment of one's imagination and creativity is not a selfish act. Rather, free enterprise is founded on giving, for it depends on sensitivity to others. It is open to faith and experimentation because it is also open to competition and bankruptcy.

Faith and imagination, products of the mind, are crucial to American economy, even more so than money. It is a fragile balance. The risks of investment of oneself, the sacrifice and giving required, will never be attempted by very many. Only a small few will attempt it. They need to be encouraged to do so, rather than told they are selfish, benefiting unfairly, or doing so at the expense of others. The chief threat is a taxation system so progressive that the rich refuse to risk their money.

Faith and imagination become the most important capital goods in a capitalist system. Such human capital is more valuable than the physical assets a business owns. For that reason, the price of a product or service includes the investment of human creativity. New knowledge does not come without a hunch, an intuition, that some new knowledge is out there, and we have not discovered it yet. Imagination, intuition, and hypothesis are the first signs of learning. Creative thought requires an act of faith. Yet, not all creative thought is true. We must test it by the response we get from sharing it. Creative thought is open to change and surprise. Ideas are falsifiable. We must be able to abandon ideas that do not fulfill their promise. It is one of the ways we have of investing in the future. The pursuit of excellence requires energy and commitment.

The vast majority of successful people have earned what they have. They were willing to take risks, and faced the possibility of failure. Success and happiness in life

come because of our own ingenuity and creativity. Capitalists depend upon faith and an essentially fair and responsive humanity. Capitalist production entails trust. That is, trust in one's neighbors, in one's society, and in the compensatory logic of the cosmos. Search and you will find; give and you will be given unto. When faith dies, so does the enterprise. Capitalism and democracy rely upon individual creativity and courage, leadership and morality, intuition and faith. The genius of the free enterprise system is the creativity, quality, and leadership of individual entrepreneurs. It adjusts to the realities of chance in human life in ways other economic systems have been unable to do. Society needs to encourage individuals to own their own businesses that buy, sell, and trade goods and services in an open, competitive market based on supply and demand.

The hesitation to believe in capitalism: limited government

People hesitate to believe that limited government interference in the economy is a good thing. Our hesitation involves our perception of business people as greedy capitalists in need of elected representatives to manage their behavior.

I like the way Adam Smith writes about the federal government in business activity in *Wealth of Nations*. The federal government must protect its citizens from foreign aggression, it must protect citizens from oppression by fellow citizens, and it must provide public works and institutions required to administer the government. It acts as the umpire, establishing the rules of economic activity while refusing to affect the outcome. The primary way government interferes in market exchanges is in regulations and taxes. When either becomes oppressive, the government can depress economic activity.

The responsibility of governments is to develop and implement sound fiscal and monetary policies that provide for the economic life of individuals and businesses within the country.

Fiscal policy analyzes the way in which the federal budget, including both taxes and spending, affects the economy. Governments use fiscal policy to influence the level of aggregate demand in the economy, in an effort to achieve economic objectives of price stability, full employment and economic growth. Keynesian economics suggest that adjusting government spending and tax rates, are the best ways to stimulate aggregate demand. This can be used in times of recession or low economic activity as an essential tool in providing the framework for strong economic growth and working toward full employment. The government can implement these deficit-spending policies due to its size and prestige and stimulate trade. In theory, these deficits would be repaid for by an expanded economy during the boom that would follow, the basis for the New Deal. During periods of high economic growth, a budget surplus can be used to decrease activity in the economy. A budget surplus will be implemented in the economy if inflation is high, in order to achieve the objective of price stability. The removal of funds from the economy will, by Keynesian Theory, reduce levels of aggregate demand in the economy and contract it, bringing about price stability.

Despite the importance of fiscal policy, a paradox exists. In the case of a government running a budget deficit, funds will need to come from public borrowing (the issue of government bonds), overseas borrowing or the printing of new money. When governments fund a deficit with the release of government bonds, an increase in interest rates across the market can occur. This is because government borrowing creates higher

demand for credit in the financial markets, causing a higher aggregate demand (AD) due to the lack of disposable income, contrary to the objective of a budget deficit. This concept is called crowding out. Alternatively, governments may increase government spending by funding major construction projects. This can also cause crowding out because of the lost opportunity for a private investor to undertake the same project. However, the effects of crowding out are usually not as large as the increase in GDP stemming from increased government spending.

Another problem is the time lag between the implementation of the policy, and visible effects seen in the economy. It is often contended that when an expansionary Fiscal policy is implemented, by way of decrease in taxes, or increased consumption (keeping taxes at old level), it leads to increase in aggregate demand; however, an unchecked spiral in aggregate demand will lead to inflation. Hence, checks need to be kept in place.

As a contrary opinion as to the influence of fiscal policy upon the economy, Milton Friedman was the leading proponent of the monetarist school of economic thought. He maintained that a close and stable link exists between inflation and the money supply. He argued that the cause of the depression in the 1930's was the failure of the Federal Reserve Board to accept the counsel of the New York State Reserve Board to increase the money supply. They pursued a policy of contracting the money supply, resulting in making what would have been a bad recession a depression. For him, government regulates the phenomenon of inflation by controlling the amount of money poured into the national economy by the Federal Reserve Bank; he rejected the use of fiscal policy as a tool to manage demand. He held that the government's role in the

guidance of the economy should be severely restricted. Friedman presented evidence to resurrect the quantity theory of money—the idea that the price level is dependent upon the money supply. In *Studies in the Quantity Theory of Money*, published in 1956, Friedman stated that in the end, increased monetary growth increases prices but has little or no effect on output. In the short run, he argued, increases in the money supply cause employment and output to increase, and decreases in the money supply have the opposite effect. Friedman's solution to the problems of inflation and short-run fluctuations in employment and real GNP was a so-called money supply rule. If the Federal Reserve board were required to increase the money supply at the same rate as real GNP increased, he argued, inflation would disappear.

Monetary policy rests on the relationship between the rates of interest in an economy, which is the price at which people can borrow money, and the total supply of money. Monetary policy uses a variety of tools to control one or both of these, to influence outcomes like economic growth, inflation, exchange rates with other currencies and unemployment. A policy is referred to as contractionary if it reduces the size of the money supply or raises the interest rate. An expansionary policy increases the size of the money supply, or decreases the interest rate. Further monetary policies are described as accommodative if the interest rate set by the central monetary authority is intended to spur economic growth, neutral if it is intended to spur neither growth nor combat inflation, or tight if intended to reduce inflation. There are several monetary policy tools available to achieve these ends. Increasing interest rates by fiat, reducing the monetary base, and increasing reserve requirements all have the effect of contracting the money supply, and, if reversed, expand the money supply. Since the 1970s, monetary policy has

generally been formed separately from fiscal policy. The primary tool of monetary policy is open market operations. This entails managing the quantity of money in circulation through the buying and selling of various credit instruments, foreign currencies or commodities. All of these purchases or sales result in more or less base currency entering or leaving market circulation.

The hesitation to believe in capitalism: value of corporations

People hesitate to believe in the value of corporations.

Many denominations have a concern about what corporations represent. The United Methodist Church, in its 2004 Book of Resolutions #206, expresses the concern that corporations have become increasingly anonymous and unaccountable to their employees, to the communities, and to the political authorities. In the Social Principles of the same denomination, its statement on Family Farms expresses the concern for the concentration of the food supply into the hands of a few international corporations. Some analysts, such as Hardt and Negri, move in the direction of the breaking down of nations and the emerging of a new empire built upon international banking, international corporations, international trade, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the United Nations. In their minds, this monetary empire operates by its own set of rules and values. They propose a new right to global citizenship that allows for the free flowing of people across national boundaries, the right to a social wage, and the right to re-appropriate the wealth gained by the producers to the population. I cannot accept any of these policy considerations. As to the new and largely financial empire, I simply have to admit my limits here. The global economy will bring changes. The conspiratorial image of distant financial groups determining the course of history is not one to which I am

inclined. Many people what to eliminate the mysteries of the economic growth stimulated by capitalism by reducing them to a form of capitalist international conspiracy.

Let us begin with the basics. Businesses need to focus upon their competency. They need to make a profit doing it. Yet, they engage in business in the context of a natural and social world. Most people will agree that businesses need to have in mind good social conditions and concern for preservation of the environment. Businesses depend upon their natural world and social context as much as individuals do. Further, care for the environment increases as technology increases as a natural growth of concern for the quality of life. However, it ought not to surprise anyone that corporations can be greedy, seek advantage in competition, treat workers poorly, not care for the environment in which they must live, and not care for the customer. Corporations will participate in the evil that human beings inflict upon each other. At the same time, corporations also express the quest for human excellence and achievement. They are an important element of the economic structure, always looking ahead to the next best thing in which to invest. They are also important to the economy in their failure, which allows the best to rise to the top of the economic ladder.

What I would like to do now is discuss briefly the role of corporate responsibility. Corporate Responsibility is a term that has come to characterize a family of professional disciplines that help a corporation stay competitive by maintaining accountability to its four main stakeholder groups: customers, employees, shareholders, and communities. The corporation has a responsibility to society. The corporation must refrain from doing harm and it must act in a way that is good for the community in which it does its work. It must eliminate corrupt, irresponsible, or unethical behavior that might bring harm to its

community and environment. Recognizing that its executives and workers are part of a community, and recognizing that they must draw their workers from its community, such corporations will see their workers as citizens with responsibilities to improve the community. Such corporations may also comply with the Global Reporting Initiative.

Starbucks Coffee Company is an example of corporate social responsibility. Here is their statement of mission and other related statements. I chose it only because the company is one with which I have personal experience. Further, the company serves as an example of the importance of freely engaging in moral reflection, including the corporate level.

> Establish Starbucks as the premier purveyor of the finest coffee in the world while maintaining our uncompromising principles while we grow.
> The following six guiding principles will help us measure the appropriateness of our decisions:
> Provide a great work environment and treat each other with respect and dignity.
> Embrace diversity as an essential component in the way we do business.
> Apply the highest standards of excellence to the purchasing, roasting and fresh delivery of our coffee.
> Develop enthusiastically satisfied customers all of the time.
> Contribute positively to our communities and our environment.
> Recognize that profitability is essential to our future success.
>
> Starbucks is committed to a role of environmental leadership in all facets of our business.
> We fulfill this mission by a commitment to:
> Understanding of environmental issues and sharing information with our partners.
> Developing innovative and flexible solutions to bring about change.
> Striving to buy, sell and use environmentally friendly products.
> Recognizing that fiscal responsibility is essential to our environmental future.
> Instilling environmental responsibility as a corporate value.
> Measuring and monitoring our progress for each project.
> Encouraging all partners to share in our mission.
>
> Our connection with coffee farmers Purveying quality coffees means much more than selecting the finest beans on the market. Starbucks

> strongly believes in the importance of building mutually-beneficial relationships with coffee farmers and coffee communities with which we work. The success of the farmers with whom we do business is a critical component of our own success. We are taking an integrated approach to building relationships with coffee communities. Components of Starbucks integrated approach are:
> Premium Prices Paying coffee farmers premium prices to help them make profits and support their families.
> Access to Affordable Credit Providing coffee farmers access to affordable credit through various loan funds so that farmers can invest in their farms and their success into the future.
> Certified and Conservation Coffees Purchasing conservation and certified coffees, including Fair Trade Certified™, shade grown and certified organic, to promote responsible environmental and economic efforts.
> C.A.F.E. Practices Encouraging participation in Starbucks Coffee and Farmer Equity Practices (C.A.F.E. Practices), a set of socially responsible coffee buying guidelines, by offering preferential buying status for participants that score the highest on verified reports.
> Social Development Programs Investing in social programs to build schools, health clinics and other projects that benefit coffee-growing communities.
> Farmer Support Center Collaborating with farmers through the Farmer Support Center, located in Costa Rica, to provide technical support and training that promotes high-quality coffee for the future.

Corporations do not exist in isolation from the rest of social and political activity. As awareness grows of the natural and social impact of corporate activity grows, so will the actions of corporate leaders. They will always need to make a profit, but even that profit occurs in the context of other forces that influence the way corporate leaders fulfill their tasks.

The hesitation to believe in capitalism: division of labor

People do not want to accept the inexhaustible mines of the division of labor.

People rightly have concern for the physical and mental safety of workers. We have concern for their leisure time. The encouragement of sharing ideas in the workplace, along with cooperative and collective work arrangements, may be positive developments in some businesses. Surely, workers ought to be able to refuse to work in situations that

endanger health and/or life without jeopardy to their jobs. Collective bargaining is one of the ways in which workers may want to express their common interest.

One perceived problem is that, as the division of labor becomes increasingly complex, the consciousness of being a member of the larger and free society declines. Excepting national crisis, such as 9/11, the sense of being a member of a larger society modifies the pressure toward individualism and toward solidarity with the group to which one belongs. As freedom and individualism expand, loyalty to any group lessens. In fact, our sense of being "American," the result of tradition and history embracing us, lessens under the pressure of the economic segmenting of the society. Greater economic mobility weakens the influence of the traditions of family and territory. As society increases in complexity, it envelops individuals less tightly, restraining with less efficiency the diverging tendencies that appear. For example, people who live in population centers feel with less force the pressure of opinion. The attention of each individual is distracted in too many different directions. Citizens do not know each other well. Even neighbors and members of the same family are in contact less often and less regularly. The sense of being American loses some of its prominence. Yet, citizens potentially acknowledge the value of being in a country that recognizes actualization through individuality. Yet, the value of the division of labor increasingly fulfills the role that once fell to the consciousness of being American.

The principle of the division of labor is not something that anyone designed rationally. Rather, it is a principle that we can discover as we observe the gradual extension of our basic need to truck, barter, and exchange one thing for one another. We stand in need of the co-operation and assistance of great multitudes, even while we

actually have only a few genuine friends in life. Other animals are largely independent. We constantly need the help of others.

The division of labor has made us rely upon the work of others in profound ways. Capitalism gives rise to these associations of friends and sets its mark upon them. Exchange does not constitute the social relationships that arise from the division of labor. Exchange implies two beings are mutually dependent upon each other because they are both incomplete. Exchange does no more than interpret externally this mutual dependence. The division of labor fulfills the function of integrating the body social and of ensuring its unity. Great political societies cannot sustain their equilibrium except by the specialization of tasks. The division of labor becomes the primary source of social solidarity. In the division of labor, we observe something other than a purely economic phenomenon. It contains the most essential condition of social life, as long as we do not consider it only for its material uses. It leads one immediately to look not only at the individuals and classes, but also at different peoples participating at the same time, each following in its own fashion and to its own special, determined degree, in a vast common enterprise. It is one whose inevitable and gradual development links those co-operating together at the present time with the line of their predecessors, whoever these may have been, and even to the line of their various successors. Thus, it is the continuous distribution of different human tasks which constitutes the principal element in social solidarity and which becomes the primary cause of the scale and growing complexity of the social organism. We know these things because social solidarity is a moral phenomenon.

A system of the formation of needs leads to the division of labor, which leads to increasing interdependence. This division of labor is coherent. Individuals do not make decisions concerning their form of life in isolation. The many occupations provided by economic freedom allow for the unfolding of human particularity and fall into groupings that are natural and cohesive, such as agriculture, business, and public service. People can choose which natural grouping of which to be a part. In doing so, they also adopt a form of life suitable for them. Most people wisely consider the social groups of which they are a part, their networks of family, neighborhood, businesses, churches, and even nation. One typically balances one's own interests in such a social context. One feels obligation toward family that goes beyond rationality. Workers develop solidarity, loyalties, and dislikes that shape their economic activity. Social and moral behavior coexists with self-interested utility-maximizing behavior on a number of levels. Groups of individuals who, because of a pre-existing moral community, are able to work together effectively achieve the greatest economic efficiency. Communities that generally act in trustful ways will innovate and permit a wide variety of social relationships to emerge. By contrast, if we do not have such trust throughout society people will cooperate only under a system of formal rules and regulations, which have to be negotiated, agreed to, litigated, and enforced. The legal apparatus becomes a transaction cost. Widespread mistrust imposes a tax on all forms of economic activity.

People freely associate in a variety of associations, such as trade unions, corporations, charitable and educational voluntary associations and religious organizations. They become like a second family. However, far from surrendering one's individual rights, as one does in family, this second family is an affirmation of individual

rights. We freely associate with others who have shared interests and concerns. The form of social life they offer is friendship, collegiality, and solidarity. Others recognize us for our skills, abilities, and achievements. They share a common outlook and way of viewing themselves and the world. They have a common articulation of human spirit.

Far from whittling away the individual personality, the division of labor develops it. The advance of the individual personality and that of the division of labor depend on each other. We cannot will one without willing the other. We need to consider the inter-connection that this principle brings throughout society. Even the poorest person in the country relies upon the productivity of thousands of workers for the clothes, food, and shelter that he or she may have.

The hesitation to believe in capitalism: market economics

People find it difficult to believe in the multiplying miracles of market economics.

People find it easier to believe that a person benefits only at the expense of another. Such an understanding of economics occurs because the person has the hidden assumption that the economy is a fixed economic pie. Certain individuals will get a larger piece of the pie only at the expense of someone else. Critics of capitalism claim that it begins with greed, avarice, or self-love, and self-interest. They often apply these traits to the leaders of corporations, while rarely applying them to the consumers who choose to participate. They also do not understand that, in any economic system, taking and consuming will not bring wealth.

The beauty of the economic theory proposed by Adam Smith, in *The Wealth of Nations,* is that voluntary economic activity occurs because both parties to the exchange benefit. Since both parties benefit, the economic pie expands. If he made a mistake, it

was in focusing his theory on the market exchanges themselves. The exchange itself is self-interest. However, if one focuses upon the business activity that makes the exchange possible, one can understand what makes market exchanges possible and impels their growth. Thus, the exchange has nothing to do with avarice. It reflects a mutual transfer of information, allowing an appropriate allocation of resources. The scientific basis for this wisdom is the mutuality of gains from people to engage in trade with each other, in the demand generated by supply, in the expanded opportunity created by growth, and in the economic futility of war. Giving requires sensitivity to the needs of others. That is another dimension of love. Sacrifice is the key to achievement. However, this sacrifice does not mean death for the one sacrificing, but life for oneself and for others. Only as we offer ourselves to our neighbors in such a sacrificial way, moving out of ourselves and meeting the needs of others, do we achieve economic well being. Most people achieve within this system because of this principle. The investment of one's imagination and creativity is not a selfish act. Rather, the foundation of free enterprise giving; it depends on sensitivity to others. The basis of the free enterprise system is an ideal that gave people a way of producing wealth in which the good fortune of others multiplied to their own. The golden rule has become economically sound.

However, if we expect to receive help from the benevolent spirit of another person, we will disappoint ourselves. Consumers will not support a business only because it has social responsibility. They will need to find some personal benefit coming back to them. Businesses will not accept social responsibility because they are nice. They will need to see a profit. We ought to have no shame in recognizing that if we appeal to the self-interest of the other person, demonstrating that we have something to offer them,

then we are more likely to receive the assistance that we need. The people who own the store down the street do not give us the food we want out of benevolence, but out of regard for their own interest. We do not address ourselves to their humanitarianism, but to their love of themselves. We do not talk about our necessities but of their advantages. This is one of central insights of capitalism: both parties to an exchange can benefit and that, as long as the cooperation is voluntary, no exchange will take place unless both parties do benefit.

Another way of look at voluntary business activity is that the country benefits when people do not focus their energy upon what they think is good for society. The country benefits most when people focus upon those activities that benefit themselves. What interests the participant, what the participant values, and what goals the participant has, is what I mean by self-interest. In focusing upon what interests you, you will also engage in activity from which others will benefit. The result of all citizens engaging in activity motivated by improving self will also attract others because of mutual benefit. The result of this voluntary and non-directed activity is the improvement of society. In fact, if a central government authority, the members of which had the highest possible motives, were to plan an economy for the good of all, they would not do as well as the voluntary, non-directed economy of capitalism. In fact, such a central authority would likely make decisions that would harm economic growth, largely through regulation and taxation policies.

The insight of Adam Smith is that the prices that emerge from the voluntary exchanges between buyers and sellers are the mechanism that performs the task of directing the economic production of a country, resulting in differentiation, complexity,

and flexibility. Prices direct the economy without requiring people to speak to each other or to like each other. Prices perform three functions. First, they transmit relevant information to the people who need to know. A supplier does not need to know all the reasons why demand has increased for the product. If demand increases, the supplier may know that the market will accept higher prices. Interference in this demand and supply mechanism will distort the information that prices provide. Second, prices provide an incentive to adopt those methods of production that are least costly and thereby use available resources for the most highly valued purposes. Prices provide an incentive for greater profit and for higher wages by workers. Third, prices determine who gets how much of the product. Prices determine income. Granted, capitalism produces large amounts of physical capital. Yet, the largest expense contained in any price is the result of human capital, the human initiative, passion, imagination, vision, and discipline that made the product. In this way, prices coordinate the activity of millions of people, all of them seeking what is best for them in a way that results in what is best for all.

Critics of capitalism often examine the profit-driven economy as an evil in that it does not evaluate economic decisions in a way that contribute to an ethic of community. Understandably, churches, as in the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church, often look negatively upon the profit motive, for it appears to put money ahead of people. The churches often demonstrate, in such statements, why all of us can be grateful that pious people do not run the economy. In reality, in order to gain a profit, businesses need to consider an ethic of community quite seriously. They need workers who value responsibility and quality work. They generally want to keep their good workers, for re-training is so expensive. They need to consider the needs of the customer, offering a

quality product or service that will earn loyalty. Another way to think of this is that the entrepreneur must constantly think of others, both workers and customers, in order to provide a profit for the company. Yes, a company must earn its way, and thus make a profit. However, any company that focuses only upon that will lose the battle for survival and success.

As citizens seeking to understand capitalism, we need to restore competition to its proper place in our market economy. This is what keeps us from sameness in economic life as well as education and other parts of our lives. Competition helps us pursue excellence. Many people view financial success as "benefiting unfairly," when in reality their example ought to be lifted up for others to emulate. When do profits become unfair and excessive? Who should have the power to decide?

The hesitation to believe in capitalism: trade

Just as people have difficulty believing in the voluntary and non-directed market system, people find it difficult to believe in the compounding gains from trade.

Of course, from a Christian perspective, trade and investment should have its basis in rules that support the dignity of the human person, a clean environment and our common humanity. Trade agreements should include mechanisms to enforce labor rights and human rights as well as environmental standards. Every trade partnership must have two willing partners. If Americans buy Japanese cars, both parties benefit. If America places tariffs on Japanese DVD players, both parties lose out: American consumers lose, since they are paying handsomely for lower-quality DVD players, and Japanese sellers lose, since they are unable to market their products.

There is a case to be made for tariffs -- but only with regard to countries whose continued growth threatens American security interests. Unfettered trade with China, for example, bolsters their anti-American national security policy. Trade with Mexico or Japan, however, benefits Americans as consumers. Those consumption savings are redirected toward businesses where American products are superior. If I save $500 by purchasing a Japanese DVD player, then that is $500 I may spend on an American car. The American DVD company may go out of business but if I am forced to keep the American DVD company in business, the American automobile company may shut down.

Adam Smith, in his *The Wealth of Nations*, referred to the common sense of families making the decision to purchase goods and services from other sources at a cheaper cost than what they could produce by themselves. In the same way, if citizens can purchase products at a cheaper cost from businesses in other countries than in their own, then they ought to have the freedom to do so. Yet, those who have the most to lose, namely, those engaged in the domestic business, will confuse such common sense decisions with other arguments, largely from patriotism, favorable balance of trade, and the rhetoric of fair trade. The reality is that they have a self-interested concern in the continuation of their businesses and jobs. Generally, domestic businesses do not need the interference of government to thrive. If they do, they ought to let go and move on to produce something else. The truth of economics is that not every business -- not even every American business -- deserves to survive. Bolstering economically unviable American businesses misallocates resources and deprives deserving American companies

of the resources they need to stay ahead. Quite bluntly, to protect the less profitable business and worker is to exploit the consumer.

Both economic theory and real world experience have shown that as markets expand, prosperity within those markets grows with them. Just as it makes no sense to limit trade between the States—the Commerce Clause of the Constitution was written precisely to prevent individual States from erecting trade barriers within the Union—it makes just as little sense to artificially limit trade between countries.

The economic theory behind free trade is simple. The basis is the idea of "comparative advantage." In the United States, for instance, it makes much more sense for some areas of the country to focus on grain production—say the Midwest—than on trying to grow cotton or vegetables. It makes little sense for Vermont to focus on trying to provide its own coal when West Virginia produces it much cheaper. Minnesota will never be the wine capital of the United States. In essence, comparative advantage is nothing more than "doing what you do best," which maximizes everybody's productivity. There is nothing magical about national borders when it comes to comparative advantage. Resources, education, skills, and other costs of doing business vary widely around the world. As trade increases worldwide, everybody gains access to an ever-wider diversity of goods and services those countries that can produce them at the lowest cost and highest efficiency. Efficiency drives productivity, and higher productivity means that luxuries that used to be affordable to only the few become widely available to everybody. Manufacturing in China has helped bring LCD TVs and $39 DVD players to the average American.

So why are people so afraid of free trade? That, too, is actually simple to understand. Economist Joseph Schumpeter introduced the idea that economic growth is a process he called “creative destruction;” economic growth is driven by innovation and radical, disruptive change, and in the wake of that change comes a string of winners and losers. There is no doubt that as the market expands from a national to a global scale, some Americans have felt the bite of competition from abroad, leading to huge personal disruptions. But those disruptions are no different than what happened when the car displaced the horse and wagon and the personal computer displaced the old mainframe.

We might note the contrasts in economic policies in two areas of the world. In Hong Kong, the focus is on education and making it easy to start cheap and lawful business credit to the poor, and low taxation are the primary economic policy. In Latin America, on the other hand, it is almost impossible for the poor to start businesses. The fees and bribes that they must pay inhibit their advance. When a society makes entrepreneurs criminals and punishes economic activism on the part of individuals, it is generating poverty. It is clear that poverty is the result of political powers. Political leaders who punish creativity in achievement are increasing the amount of poverty in the world. Capitalism is simply the system that has proved to be the most helpful to the poor. It is competitive by design to prevent the growth of monopolies that would allow the few to have undue economic power. This requires, on the one hand, a political system of freedom and order, as well as a moral culture that defines acceptable and unacceptable behavior.

People in countries with few national resources can achieve great material success. The London economist Peter Bauer is the strongest proponent of this position,

and I would urge anyone to read him. Material success in third world countries happens when they organize around the principles of entrepreneurship, invention, and organization, even when the government establishes counter-productive polices. Foreign governments and Christian mission work do not help matters when they enter a country bearing gifts that put local business people out of work. A study by the World Bank is involves The East Asian Miracle. It involves a study of the economies of Japan, Hong Kong, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand. It reveals that they grew, in the period 1965 to 1993, faster than any other region. The people have been moved from destitution to affluence in one generation. Some hoped the study would suggest they found a "third way" between capitalism and socialism. Not true! Any government intervention which took place tended to have unintended consequences and was not significant to the real reason for growth. The report concludes that these people studied harder, worked harder, and saved more, than people in other economies. Thus, the Asian "miracle" is rather boring. It is the result of simple virtues like thrift, work, and enterprise, rather than divine favor.

The hesitation to believe in capitalism: The value of the inequitable distribution of wealth in a free society

People do not want to accept the enriching mysteries of economic inequality.

The Wall Street Journal reported on December 17, 2007 that America is still an upwardly mobile society. In 1996, 110,000 households were millionaires, in 2000 it was 176,000, and in 2005 it was 304,000. In 2005, 10% of the households had an income of more than $100,000. A growing and dynamic society should value such upward mobility. Incomes are not stagnant. Opportunities continue to exist.

In every country, people are unhappy about the distribution of income. In command economies, the rulers receive that anger. In market-oriented economies, the market receives that anger. We all think that we are more valuable than what the market will allow.

Inequality of income distribution in free market societies often becomes the focal point of economic and political debate. Citizens often hear the unequal distribution of income in a context that suggests it is a bad thing. We ought to distribute income more equally, so some have suggested. Yet, maybe you have the same hesitation that I have had. Something instinctively told me that this was wrong. What was it?

Before I answer that question, we need to remind ourselves that in history, and in the world today, unequal distribution of wealth is morally wrong. Thus, the history of economic inequality supplies a reason for this hesitation. Often, such unequal distribution of wealth occurred because of hereditary positions of political power, heavy taxation, and military conquest. It often rested on various forms of slave labor. Uneven economic distribution for these reasons is never moral.

For the Jew and Christian, our way of reading the prophets will affect our approach toward matters of the unequal distribution of wealth. If we read them through Marxist analysis, we arrive at one conclusion. However, the prophets of the Old Testament did not have Marx to influence them. In fact, the Old Testament often looks at wealth as the product of hard work and a moral life. The prophets celebrated the expansion of trade and wealth under kings like Solomon and Hezekiah. Proverbs, part of the wisdom school within Israel, also viewed wealth as the product of hard work and character. However, both the prophets and the wisdom teachers of Israel condemned

wealth achieved through stealing from others or motivated by greed. The Bible does not condemn people for gaining wealth. It does concern itself with the godly wealthy person does with their wealth.

In part, unequal income distribution occurs because of inherited wealth. Even though statistics show that unless they learn to manage this wealth and put it to work, they will lose it, critics of capitalism will want the federal government to have tax policies that reduce the influence of inherited wealth.

Another objection to the unequal distribution of wealth is the distorted value of what people offer. A basketball player can earn millions a year, while a teacher earns a few thousand. Yet, a player like Michael Jordan not only reached the highest level of the game thus far, but he pleased millions of people with his play. In other words, people are worth what the market value of their gift is. While there are thousands of teachers, there is only one Michael Jordan.

Further, we live in a world full of poor people; no matter how much wealth we create. Poverty is a terrible reality generated by the basic structure of civil society itself. Poverty is material deprivation. Poverty is a condition of destitution, want, and need. Poverty has no redeeming moments. People lack the resources, income and skills required to participate meaningfully in civil and political life. According to the Harvard School of Risk Analysis, poverty cuts life expectancy of the poor in America by nine years, by far the greatest health risk any American faces.[3] Poverty is a circumstance of alienation. These are evils. Therefore, poverty is a matter of deep concern, even if it seems insoluble. Poverty is a serious flaw in the liberal democracies.

[3] John Stossel, *Give Me a Break*, 2005, p. 95.

The separation between rich and poor is a real problem that America needs to face. The assumption of the Left is that people are wealthy because they have taken something that legitimately belongs to the poor. The assumption of the Right is that people are wealthy largely because they have worked hard and earned it. The Left is willing to divide America into two cities, one rich and one poor. The Left is willing to divide the global community into two nations, the wealthy and the poor. Such divisions overly simplify a problem that, in reality, is far more complex. Such assumptions lead to analysis of presidential politics. The assumption of the Left is that the 1980's saw redistribution of the wealth of the country from the poor to the rich. The assumption of the Right is that Reagan provided an economic plan that led to the movement out of the stagnating economy under Jimmy Carter and into the bright sunshine of low taxes and high economic growth, the benefits of which extended to both George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton.

The failure of the analysis of economic life by the Left is greatest at this point. Animosity and alienation that the approach of the Left engenders toward the wealthy is not a helpful emotion to generate, either among themselves or among the poor. It tends to make the poor victims, the wealthy and corporations the persecutors, and the elite of the Left as rescuers of the poor. Such a position encourages the poor to look to the government for entitlements to rescue them. The poor then think that other people owe them a living. When others do not meet their demand, they will wind up believing everyone is their enemy. The assumption seems to be that someone, I assume white, male, and Republican, has designed a global system in which a few benefit and gain wealth whereas most experience the global system as victims.

My father provided for seven people in the late 1950's and throughout the 1960's on an average of $15,000. My mother worked, but her income was small. Though dad and I disagreed on many things, I will always be grateful for his efforts to provide for us. My first real job in 1979 provided an income of $14,000, and my wife worked to make ends meet. I went from the bottom 20% of income households to the top 20% through daily faithfulness to my job, being a minister, and through financial discipline. I share these personal realities because people seem to think that we have hidden agendas when we seek to make intellectual arguments on behalf of certain positions.

As an aside, the Democrat Party often refers to the rich Republicans, who favor the rich. Yet, in 2002, people who gave less than $1000 were 44 million to the Democrats and 68 million to the Republicans. Those who gave over $10,000 gave 140 million dollars to the Democrats and $111 million to the Republicans. Of those who gave over $100,000, the Democrats received 72 million dollars and the Republicans received $34 million. People who gave a million dollars or more gave 36 million to the Democrats and 3 million to the Republicans. In other words, the rich favor Democrats and the middle class favor Republicans.

The Left, in offering a mistaken analysis of the problem, offer unwise tax and spend politics as a remedy. For example, the bifurcation of the world between wealthy nations and poor nations is the result of the unequal distribution of freedom, not the unequal distribution of wealth. Economic freedom and political freedom require cultural values that will support them. They also require changes in the traditions to the value of respecting the worth and dignity of others, regardless of their beliefs. In 2003, according to the Heritage Foundation, Hong Kong, Singapore, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Ireland,

Denmark, Estonia, America, Australia, and the United Kingdom are the countries with the greatest economic freedom in the world. The countries with the least economic freedom were North Korea, Cuba, Zimbabwe, Laos, and Libya. The economic division in the world is not so much between rich and poor nations, but rather between free and totalitarian nations. The distinction is not between the "so-called" free world or West and everyone else. The genuine experience of freedom in some countries is the primary reason they experience economic well-being and that other nations do not.

Maybe now the reader is ready for the main point of this discussion. The inequality of income distribution within capitalism is one of its best features. If we focus upon distribution rather than production, we will forever count how many rich and poor exist, become outraged at the discrepancy, and argue for a government powerful enough to re-distribute wealth. The focus on distribution assumes that wealth is a zero-sum game, in which the gain for one person means a decline for another. We often puzzle why some people richer than others are. Well, some people have a greater capacity to please others than most of us do. Most rich people have pleased many people, or are the children of people who have done so.

Assuming an equal distribution of freedom among citizens, people still have different abilities, talents, desires, and characteristics. We are unequal by nature. In culture, this natural inequality rises to an inequality of skill and resources, and even to one of moral and intellectual attainment. The demand for a right of equality takes as real and rational the abstract nature of equality. There is no way government can equalize these differences, except by force. To focus on the apparent unfairness of this is to encourage envy and bitterness between classes. It also does not keep the focus on what

the poor need, such as education, training, formation of character, self-reliance and achievement.

I grant that inherited wealth does not fall into this understand of wealth because of pleasing others. However, one does not need to resort to government to even the playing field. The stupidity and carelessness of many wealthy persons will do just fine. Statistics consistently show that unless such individuals learn to manage this wealth and put it to work, they eventually lose it.

Free enterprise builds upon the natural human desire to achieve. Among the natural human questions, is this: What should I do with my life? The question is a moral and spiritual one. One develops an answer as one develops a skill and is able to market that skill. Such an act is a matter of offering a gift. It is a gift of oneself, as well as the skill, which one offers. Unfortunately, opponents of free enterprise have succeeded in picturing this process as a selfish one. In fact, defenders have used the term "self-interest" to describe the process. I would like to suggest the image of sacrifice as the key to this process. The essence of capitalism is this: Only as we offer ourselves to our neighbors in a sacrificial way, moving out of ourselves and meeting the needs of others, do we achieve economic well-being. Free societies need individuals who do their best, rather than individuals who rely upon government. Yet, some citizens view these people with suspicion and consider them selfish when they want to keep what they have earned.

Why are some people richer than others are? In a free society, the answer is quite simple. Some people have a greater capacity to please others than most of us do. Either most rich people have pleased many people, or they are the children of people who have done so. People have different abilities, talents, desires, and characteristics. There is no

way society can equalize these differences, except by force. To focus on the apparent unfairness of this is to encourage envy and bitterness between classes. Such a focus also does not keep the focus on what the poor need most, which is self-reliance and achievement. The mystery is not why there is poverty, for that has existed for most of human history and for most of the people. The mystery is why there is affluence. The answer may be: freedom to pursue one's own interests without interference, and government protection of private property rights.

In the end, nothing enhances self-esteem like achieving through work. Such achievement allows one to provide for oneself and for family. It is one of the ways we have of investing in the future.

The horror one senses in the voice and pen of those on the Left arise because their perspective is one in which statistics of wealth distribution are static pictures of the economy at one moment in time. They do not want to consider that such statistics reflect the normal up and down movement of income throughout the year or the decade. For example, the bottom of the economic ladder will have a large portion of elderly because they are past their productive years. The bottom of the economic ladder will also consist of a large proportion of young people, since they are at the beginning of their productive years, a fact that suggests that a large proportion of children will always be toward the bottom of the economic ladder. None of this suggests that the problem is not real. It only means that, for most young families, living toward the bottom of the economic ladder is a temporary situation. Since the young and the old will always be with us, we will always have people at the bottom of the income ladder. Further, people who self-destruct through drugs, alcohol, crime, the failure to educate themselves toward the best life they

can lead, will always be with us. Such observations do not suggest doing nothing, although they do bring, I hope, some realism into the discussion in the public square.

Who are these rich people?

These persons are ordinary people who happen to be at the stage of their lives where they are earning more than they did in years past and more than they will be earning in the future. They are largely people in their 50's or early 60's who have worked their way up to a decent income and are seeing much of it drained away by politicians who proclaim that the rich ought to pay their fair share. The rich, therefore, are not a different class of people than anyone else. Rather, they are people in older age brackets who have accumulated some money in a pension fund, paid off most of their mortgage and put a little money aside to see them through retirement and the illnesses of old age. The average net worth by someone 65 years old or older is more than 10 times the net worth of households headed by someone under 25. These are not different classes, for the one who is now 65 were at one time 35. Most Americans will likely have incomes in the top 10% at some point during their lives.

For example, no other group in society can do the risk-bearing role that the rich play in economic creativity as effectively. The bottom of the economic ladder does not create wealth. To put it graphically, none of us would go to a poor person and ask for a job. Rather, we go to those who have generated wealth. They then foster opportunities for the classes below them. The United States is the most upwardly mobile society in history, and yet rage against the wealthy is still an idea that works.

The mystery is not why there is poverty, for that has existed for most of human history and for most of the people. The mystery is why modern society and American

society has generated so much affluence. The answer may be the structure of freedom that the liberal democracies have provided their citizens. That structure includes domestic life, civic life free of government, and political life in which one can meaningfully participate. This culture of freedom provides the opportunity to respect the worth and dignity of individuals as well as belong to various social groups in ways that other societies cannot do.

In generally free economies, the engine of economic growth is the relatively small number of persons who have the faith, the hope, and the vision to pursue their economic goals. Free societies need these persons to invest and take risks. When they do so, they gather others around them to help them accomplish the dream. In the process, they develop a work environment and a team. They must also consider the needs of their customers. This dependence of the economic plan of the nation upon a decentralized web of people spread throughout the society and the resulting division of labor is difficult for people to comprehend and to trust. These persons do not act for the social good. They do not act for the poor. Yet, the byproduct of their activity is for the social good. A growing economy benefits everyone, and in particular the poor. In other words, the engine of free enterprise and capitalism is not the wealthy or the powerful. The engine of a growing free enterprise economy is the many emerging enterprises built by people who have faith, vision, and hope. They have the capacity to bring other people into the orbit of their vision.

Unfortunately, the poor in America have been singled out for a socialist system. It makes them dependent upon the state for health care, housing, food, income. They have been made slaves in a feudal plantation system. All the good intentions of the

Johnson War on Poverty programs have resulted in a rise in crime, illegitimacy, and money to fund the programs. We must take responsibility for the monster we have created, note the devastating consequences, and correct our mistakes.

From the standpoint of Christian teaching, economies of every nation fall under the judgment of God, based upon the impact upon the poor and outcast and the care of the earth. Sound financial policies, sound environment policies, sound budget policies, and so on, are important ways governments care for all persons. As I hope to show, the American tax structure benefits those at the lower end of the economic structure of the society in a great way. The property of citizens deserves respect. From a Christian perspective, we are accountable to God for the use of our property. As with every right we have as human beings, the right to use property is a right we exercise in the context of the community.

One of the important dimensions of the protection of workers is the formation of labor unions. These organizations have the opportunity to negotiate directly with employers. In the process, they often bring benefit to people who are not part of the union as well by setting new standards. Some churches, such as embodied in the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church, encourage the federal government to provide jobs for people who do not have them. As I hope is clear, this is not a policy with which I could find agreement. Yet, the focus of the government upon the poor who do not have adequate health care, education, or training, is a way to ease the pain of brokenness and can provide a way toward a healthy life.

Being poor does not entail the same degree of deprivation it once did. In fact, by the standards of 1971, many of today's poor families might be considered members of the

middle class. At first blush, it is not apparent how the poor can afford more of the trappings of middle-class life yet still not escape from the poverty statistics. Spending patterns provide a clue. Among households below the poverty line, outlays for food, clothing and shelter were 37% of consumption in 1995, compared with 52% two decades earlier, 57% in 1950 and 75% in 1920. The smaller the share of income going to meet basic needs, the more money left over to purchase the goods and services that most poor households once had to do without.

In America, the classification of the bottom 20%, or even the classification of "poor," has become meaningless. Think of the things that Americans have. We have good food, clothing, cars, and homes; advanced communications; art and entertainment; foreign travel. Such things have become available to the masses. They are no longer the luxuries of the rich. Further, actual consumption, health status, and longevity, show marked equality throughout the system.

The average poor household has their own washing machine (72%), dryer (50%), microwave ovens (66%), color television (97%), VCR (75%), car (75%), air conditioner (66%). 41% own their homes. 26.5% have access to credit cards. To compare these statistics with 1971, one could only conclude that the poor are middle class.

Today's poor households are more likely than those of a decade ago to own appliances and motor vehicles. The percentage of poor households with washing machines rose from 58% percent in 1984 to 72% by 1995 (the latest available data). Ownership of dryers went from 36% to 50%. Two-thirds of poor families had microwave ovens in 1995, up from one-eighth a decade ago. Ninety-seven percent of poor households have color televisions, and three-fourths can play movies on videocassette

recorders. Almost three-quarters of the families own at least one car. Perhaps most astonishing of all, poor households of the 1990s in many cases compared favorably with average families in the early 1970s. For example, two-thirds of poor households had air-conditioners in 1995, compared to less than a third for the country as a whole in 1971. The pattern holds true for dryers, refrigerators, stoves, microwaves and color televisions. What's more, today's poor are less likely to be ostracized from our consumer society. Home ownership among poor families rose from 37% in the early 1970s to 41% in the mid-1990s. They have, moreover, greater access to credit. In 1970, only 2% of families in the bottom 9% of the income distribution had general-purpose credit cards. By the mid-1990s, the percentage had grown to 26.5.

When we read of income disparity, we rarely read about the difference between what the poor earn ($6,305), and what they spend ($13,130), as of 1995, for the lowest 20% of income households. The reason is the income transfers to them through government programs, mostly through food stamps, unemployment benefits, AFDC, Medicare, Medicaid, school lunches, rent subsidies, and other programs. Many have savings to fall back on. Many retirees have low incomes, but own their home, car, and furnishings. In 1993, 302,000 families with incomes of less than $20,000 lived in homes valued at more than $300,000. The evidence is in. 98% of America is in the middle class or above, based upon consumption. Daniel Slesnick of the University of Texas provides the latter statistic.

As to actual income gaps, according to traditional measurements, they are widening, even after eight years with a Democrat president. What is wrong? The answer is, nothing. Such disparities are the result of broad trends, in the decade of the 1990's that

created 17 million jobs and added 20% to median household net worth. The unstated assumption is that if the disparities were lower they would be fairer.

Nine states, led by New York, have the largest gap between the upper 20% and the lowest 20%. Indiana led the way with lowest income disparity.

Income varies with education. New York has 26% of those over 24 with a college degree, while Indiana has 16%. Immigrants tend to cluster in low and high-income groups. It is no wonder that New York, Arizona, New Mexico, Louisiana, California, Rhode Island, and Texas are the seven states with the greatest disparity. Manufacturing tends to have equalization of income, while service workers can span income brackets wildly. Indiana has 23% of manufacturing jobs, whereas Arizona, Louisiana, and New York have only 10%. Rural regions of the country have lower disparities than states with large metropolitan areas.

In addition, America is not a caste society. A 17-year study by the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas found that only 5% of people in the economy's lowest 20% failed to move to a higher income group. The Treasury Department studied the period from 1979 to 1988 and discovered that 86% of Americans in the bottom 20% of income earners improved their status.

In the end, diversity of income in a free society is a good thing. The government has no need to interfere in business activities by millions of people who produce, work, and create in order to equalize the outcome of this activity. To the extent that it does so, it harms all citizens. Higher taxes on the rich do not help one poor person. Constantly talking about the rich feeds into a tendency all of us have, that of blaming someone else for our economic status. Instead of focusing upon what others have, all persons are better

off if they focus upon the ways they can discipline themselves to accomplish their financial goals.

The hesitation to believe in capitalism: the value of low taxes

People hesitate to believe that low taxes will fund the government programs that people want.

Many Americans seem concerned that the rich must pay their fair share. To accuse anyone of favoring tax cuts for the rich is still a winning election move. One might assume that if one cuts taxes on the rich they also share a smaller burden of the federal budget. If so, then the middle class and poor must pay more. Is any of this true?

Taxes do not just provide revenue for the government. Taxes affect human behavior. The Left and Right disagree on taxes. Federal taxes have climbed to their highest level since WWII. They consume 20% of the national economic output.

Let us take a closer look. In an article in the Wall Street Journal, December 17, 2007, one can see the actual distribution of income and taxes. The top 1% in 1990 had 14% of the income in the United States and paid 25% of the taxes. In 2000, after a Democrat Party administration, their income rose to 21% of the income in the United States and 37% of the taxes paid. In 2005, their income was level after the tax cuts, averaging $365,000 per household, but they paid 39% of the taxes. The top 1% of wage earners averaged $295,495 in income and paid 34.3% of the income taxes in 2003. These persons pay ten times the federal income taxes than half of the country. The top 5% in 1990 earned 27% of the income in the United States and paid 44% of the taxes. In 2000, these households earned $127,000 or more, earned 35% of the income and paid 56% of the taxes. In 2005, they earned and adjusted gross income of $145,000 or 36% of the

income and paid 60% of the taxes. The bottom 50% of the wage earners pays 3.5% of the taxes. The *bottom* 80% pays 20% of the income taxes. In 2000, the top 10% of the income producers in America averaged $63,500. This could mean two persons making $36,000, hardly what most Americans would consider rich. This group paid 65.8% of the federal income tax. The top 10 percent, earning income over $103,000, paid 70 percent. The top 25 percent, with income of over $62,000, paid 86 percent, and the top 50 percent, earning $31,000 and higher, paid 97 percent of all federal taxes.

What about any argument suggesting that the burden of taxes have been shifted to the poor? The bottom 50 percent, earning $30,000 or less, paid 3 percent of total federal income taxes. In 1999, they paid 4 percent. Frank Pastore, in his article of April 1, 2007, wrote that in 2004, the bottom 50% earn 13.42% of the total federal taxes and paid 3.3% of the taxes. By contrast, the top 50% earned 86.58% of the income and paid 96.7% of the taxes.

Congressmen know all of this, but they attempt to hoodwink the average American who does not.

The result is that when the country has a tax cut, the upper 50% will receive the benefit, since they are the ones who pay the taxes. Yet, the tax cuts since 2001 increased the share of federal income taxes paid by the highest earners. The total amount of tax reduction will be far more for the upper levels. Looked at from one perspective, it appears that the tax burden shifts to the middle class. However, after tax cuts, not only do all income levels receive benefit proportionate to what they owe the government, the share of total federal income taxes paid by the upper levels of income producers always goes up.

The fact that so many American earners have little or no financial stake in our country poses a serious political problem. The Tax Foundation estimates that 41 percent of whites, 56 percent of blacks, 59 percent of American Indian and Aleut Eskimo and 40 percent Asian and Pacific Islanders had no 2004 federal income tax liability. The study concluded, "When all of the dependents of these income-producing households are counted, there are roughly 122 million Americans -- 44 percent of the U.S. population -- who are outside of the federal income tax system." These people represent a natural constituency for big-spending politicians. In other words, if you have little or no financial stake in America, what do you care about the cost of massive federal spending programs? Similarly, what do you care about tax cuts if you are paying little or no taxes? In fact, you might be openly hostile toward tax cuts out of fear that they might lead to reductions in handout programs from which you benefit. Survey polls have confirmed this. According to The Harris Poll taken in June 2003, 51 percent of Democrats thought the tax cuts enacted by Congress were a bad thing while 16 percent of Republicans thought so. Among Democrats, 67 percent thought the tax cuts were unfair while 32 percent of Republicans thought so. When asked whether the $350 billion tax cut package will help your family finances, 59 percent of those surveyed said no and 35 percent said yes. Whether you're for or against President Bush matters little, but what do you think of politicians and their media dupes winning you over with lies about the rich not paying their fair share? By the way, $145,000 or even $345,000 a year hardly qualifies one as rich. It is not even yacht money.

Another part of it is a widening gap between low-income households' earnings and spending. The poverty rate tells us how many Americans live on low incomes. It

provides an incomplete accounting of their resources. Most households in the bottom fifth of the income distribution consume well beyond their current earnings. In 1995, an average low-income household made $6,305 a year before taxes. Consumption -- what the poor spent, not what they earned -- totaled $13,130.

How the Poor Spend Their Money

	Lowest fifth	Middle fifth	Highest fifth
Household income (before taxes)	$6,305	$28,242	$89,011
Household consumption:			
Food	$2,490	$4,270	$7,522
Clothing	$759	$1,502	$3,402
Shelter	$2,741	$4,423	$8,919
Telephone, utilities	$1,460	$2,122	$3,044
Transportation	$2,021	$5,745	$11,155
Health care	$1,099	$1,700	$2,417
Other	$2,560	$5,563	$15,747
Total consumption	$13,130	$25,325	$52,206
Average household size	1.8	2.6	3.1
Consumption per person	$7,294	$9,741	$16,841
Other uses of income:			
Taxes	$1,004	$4,672	$16,357
Cash contributions	$284	$697	$1,914
Education	$308	$273	$1,172
Financial flows*	($8,421)	($2,725)	$17,076

*Insurance, pensions, investment expenses and dissaving (governmenttransfers).

How can poor families consume more than they earn? Many supplement their income through food stamps, unemployment benefits, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Medicare, Medicaid, food stamps, school lunches, rent subsidies and other programs. When it comes to what they consume, moreover, many low-income households tap into other resources. Workers temporarily laid off make little money, but they can fall back on savings rather than do without. Although many retirees have low incomes, their houses, cars and furnishings are paid for, and they have got nest eggs to

spend on vacations and grandkids. In 1993, 302,000 families with incomes of less than $20,000 lived in homes valued at more than $300,000.

University of Texas economist Daniel Slesnick recalculated the poverty rate based on spending rather than income. To remove the vagaries of inflation, he established the poverty threshold at three times the cost of a nutritionally adequate diet for all members of a household. Slesnick’s results show that the proportion of poor in the United States, measured by consumption, fell steadily from 31% in 1949 to 13% in 1965 and 2% at the end of the 1980s. If the problem of poverty is access to goods and services, then this lower rate provides a better indication of how the economy has done in lifting families out of poverty.

Mathematics makes no compromises. It dictates that 20% of American households will lie at the tail end of the income distribution, always relatively "poor" by the standards of society, no matter how much they consume. No one wants to minimize the plight of the truly down-and-out. America's low-income families, however, are better off than they were at any time in the past. The data on consumption lead to an unmistakable conclusion: The rich might be getting richer, but the poor are not getting poorer.

The hesitation to believe in capitalism: Private property

Many people hesitate to believe in the value of private property.

Proudhon claimed that property is theft, surely an exaggeration, and definitely a contradiction in terms. It denies the legitimacy of property while the concept of theft presupposes it. In his treatise What is Property?(1849), Proudhon answers with "Property is theft!" In natural resources, he sees two conceivable types of property, de jure property

and de facto property, and argues that the former is illegitimate. Proudhon's fundamental premise is that equality of condition is the essence of justice. "By this method of investigation, we soon see that every argument which has been invented in behalf of property, whatever it may be, always and of necessity leads to equality; that is, to the negation of property." But unlike the statist socialists of his time, Proudhon's solution is not to give each person an equal amount of property, but to deny the validity of legal property in natural resources altogether.

His analysis of the product of labor upon natural resources as property (usufruct) is more nuanced. He asserts that land itself cannot be property, yet it should be held by individual possessors as stewards of humanity with the product of labor being the property of the producer. Like most theorists of his time, both capitalist and socialist, he assumed the labor theory of value to be correct. Thus, Proudhon reasoned, any wealth gained without labor was stolen from those who labored to create that wealth. Even a voluntary contract to surrender the product of labor to an employer was theft, according to Proudhon, since the controller of natural resources had no moral right to charge others for the use of that which he did not labor to create and therefore did not own.

Proudhon's theory of property greatly influenced the budding socialist movement, inspiring anarchist theorists such as Bakunin who modified Proudhon's ideas, as well as antagonizing theorists like Marx.

Modern property rights conceive of ownership and possession as belonging to legal individuals, even if the legal individual is not a real person. Corporations, for example, have legal rights similar to American citizens, including many of their

constitutional rights. Therefore, the corporation is a juristic person or artificial legal entity, which some refer to as "corporate personhood".

Property rights are protected in the current laws of states usually found in the form of a Constitution or a Bill of Rights. The fifth and the fourteenth amendment to the United States constitution, for example, provides explicitly for the protection of private property:

> The Fifth Amendment states:
>
> Nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

The Fourteenth Amendment states:

> No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law.

United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 17, protects property. “Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.” The point is, people have the right to own things and nobody has the right to take these from them without a good reason. The declaration is advisory, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (A/RES/217, 10 December 1948 at Palais de Chaillot, Paris). It consists of 30 articles that outline the view of the United Nations General Assembly on the human rights guaranteed to all people. Eleanor Roosevelt, first chairwoman of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) that drafted the Declaration, said, "It is not a treaty...[In the future, it] may well become the international Magna Carta..."

The French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, Article XVII, also protects private property.

> Since property is an inviolable and sacred right, no one shall be deprived thereof except where public necessity, legally determined, shall clearly demand it, and then only on condition that the owner shall have been previously and equitably indemnified.

The declaration is one of the fundamental documents of the French Revolution, defining a set of individual rights and collective rights of all of the estates as one. Influenced by the doctrine of natural rights, these rights are universal: they are supposed to be valid in all times and places, pertaining to human nature itself. The National Constituent Assembly, as the first step toward writing a constitution, adopted the last article of the Declaration August 26, 1789. While it set forth fundamental rights, not only for French citizens but for all men without exception, it did not make any statement about the status of women, nor did it explicitly address slavery. It is, however, considered to be a precursor to international human rights instruments:

The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), Protocol 1, also protects property, but with an important modification.

> Every natural or legal person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his possessions. No one shall be deprived of his possessions except in the public interest and subject to the conditions provided for by law and by the general principles of international law.
>
> The preceding provisions shall not, however, in any way impair the right of a State to enforce such laws as it deems necessary to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest or to secure the payment of taxes or other contributions or penalties.

The Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, also known as the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), was adopted under the auspices of the Council of Europe in 1950 to protect human rights and fundamental

freedoms. All Council of Europe member states are party to the Convention and new members are expected to ratify the convention at the earliest opportunity.

Traditionally, that bundle of rights includes:

> control of the use of the property
> the right to any benefit from the property (examples: mining rights and rent)
> a right to transfer or sell the property
> a right to exclude others from the property.

In his classic text, "The Common Law", Oliver Wendell Holmes describes property as having two fundamental aspects. The first is possession, which can be defined as control over a resource based on the practical inability of another to contradict the ends of the possessor. The second is title, which is the expectation that others will recognize rights to control resource, even when it is not in possession. He elaborates the differences between these two concepts, and proposes a history of how they came to be attached to individuals, as opposed to families or entities such as the church.

According to Adam Smith, the expectation of profit from "improving one's stock of capital" rests on private property rights, and the belief that property rights encourage the property holders to develop the property, generate wealth, and efficiently allocate resources based on the operation of the market is central to capitalism. From this evolved the modern conception of property as a right that is enforced by positive law, in the expectation that this would produce more wealth and better standards of living.

Classical liberals, libertarians, and related traditions have a strong sense of the importance of private property.

> "Just as man can't exist without his body, so no rights can exist without the right to translate one's rights into reality, to think, to work and keep the results, which means: the right of property." (Ayn Rand, Atlas Shrugged)

> Most thinkers from these traditions subscribe to the labor theory of property. They hold that you own your own life, and it follows that you must own the products of that life, and that those products can be traded in free exchange with others.
> "Every man has a property in his own person. This nobody has a right to, but himself." (John Locke, Second Treatise on Civil Government)
> "Life, liberty, and property do not exist because men have made laws. On the contrary, it was the fact that life, liberty, and property existed beforehand that caused men to make laws in the first place." (Frédéric Bastiat, The Law)
> "The reason why men enter into society is the preservation of their property." (John Locke, Second Treatise on Civil Government)

Aristotle, in Politics, advocates "private property." In one of the first known expositions of tragedy of the commons he says, "that which is common to the greatest number has the least care bestowed upon it. Every one thinks chiefly of his own, hardly at all of the common interest; and only when he is himself concerned as an individual." In addition, he says when property is common there are natural problems that arise due to differences in labor: "If they do not share equally enjoyments and toils, those who labor much and get little will necessarily complain of those who labor little and receive or consume much. But indeed there is always a difficulty in men living together and having all human relations in common, but especially in their having common property." (Politics, 1261b34)

The parental role of government and the alienating effects of poverty

The parental role of government may extend as far as providing retirement, public assistance, housing subsidies, and medical care. I would suggest that the federal government might have an important role, while at the same time providing for diversity.

America, more than almost any other country, is based on the idea that individuals should have the freedom to pursue their individual goals and use their talents for

advancement. Nonetheless, the idea of America also is one of a society that involves both membership rights and obligations for its members. This American version of the European idea of social contract envisions reciprocal obligations.

The obligation as a society is to assure individuals that nobody will suffer unreasonable hardship because of factors beyond their control. While other societies have interpreted this obligation as a justification for extensive government protec-tions and programs, in America we have tradition-ally based this obligation on the extensive network of civil society institutions, including family, church, and neighborhood association.

The obligation of individuals whom wider society helps is to use that assistance responsibly and to try to return to independence and self-sufficiency.

We will make far more headway if we begin with the proposition that all persons are a reflection of the image of the God who made them. With this religious contribution to the sense of the worth and dignity of individuals, we can engage in conversation with rich and poor alike as to how we can work together to improve human life. If we are to improve human life in America and in the world, it will because rich, poor, and everyone in between, will work together to get this done. The assumption of the Left that wealthy persons are so because they have taken from others, oppressed others, and benefited from the misfortune of others, is not going to advance the cultural conversation that we need to have in order to improve the economic condition of all persons. Such an approach can come closer to the biblical ideal of *shalom,* or genuine peace, wholeness, justice, and fairness, and therefore of right relationships between the various economic groups in society.

Michael Novak has made the point that our understanding of economics must be worked out with the poor always at the center of our attention. Frankly, any society that failed to exhibit concern in its members would be an objectively alienating society. The enlightenment moral aspiration of liberty, fraternity, and equality is consistent with the abolition of poverty and the increase of wealth. A person's willingness to spend government funds on aid programs is not evidence that the person is compassionate. The willingness to spend money on defense is not a sign that a person is brave. The willingness to spend government money on sports is not a sign that a person is physically fit. In the same way, one who lacks compassion may favor various government aid programs. Conversely, a compassionate person may oppose those programs. Our political beliefs are not a test of compassion. If you want to determine how compassionate an individual is you should ask what charitable contributions the person has made, or what volunteer work he or she has done. You might also inquire into how the person responds to the needs of relatives, friends, and neighbors. True compassion is a bulwark of strong families and communities, of liberty and self-reliance, while the false compassion of the second usage is fraught with great danger and dubious results. True compassion is people helping people out of a genuine sense of caring. It is not asking your legislator or member of Congress to do it for you. True compassion comes from your heart, not from government treasuries. True compassion is a deeply personal thing, not a check from a distant bureaucracy.

Every attempt to reflect upon the moral content of an economic system must place at its heart what the impact is upon the weakest members of the society. At the risk of sounding rather absolute, every religious tradition of which I know urges compassion

toward the weakest and poorest of society. The American experience is one of rooting for the downtrodden and the underdog. Our consideration of discourse in the public square will need to take that seriously. As an example, migrant workers are a special case of low wage farm worker that many find it easy to exploit because of the transitory nature of their jobs. Further, moral consideration in the public square will need to reflect seriously upon the quite real alienation represented by riots, violence against women, the breakdown of family, the abuse of sexuality, the cultivation of the victim and entitlement mentality, the encouragement of envy of the wealthy and greed among citizens, all of which has led to further problems.

Now, as a Christian, I grant that we must work out our understanding of economics with the poor always at the center of our attention. The future of any system of government and any way of life lies with what happens to the poor. Political powers can increase and deepen poverty. Political leaders who provide a totalitarian structure for the social world of a nation have as their purpose deepening poverty for at least a portion of their culture. The government that pays people not to work turns the poor to a life of leisure not because of moral weakness but because the government pays them. In many liberal democracies, the poor have a socialist system directed toward them that makes them dependent upon the state for health care, housing, food, and income. Government policies have made them slaves in a feudal plantation system. When government gives relief, it is stingy. The reason is not greed on the part of government officials. Rather, the reason is the vastness of the problem. Society cannot provide enough money, it cannot provide enough personal contact, and it cannot provide the appropriate challenge to strive for the best of what they are capable of becoming. Political leaders who punish creativity

in achievement increase the amount of poverty in the world. Any economic system that does not provide for movement between economic classes, rewarding people for their successes and giving consequences for their failures, cannot provide the context for hope to come alive among those least fortunate in society.

Some persons with a political agenda of enhancing government intrusion into economic life would suggest that I am blaming the victim. In their view, if one does not embrace the poor, no matter what their demands or conduct, one has blamed the victim of modern society. One could always blame middle class values, big business, or racism. For these persons, the poor have no responsibility for their economic situation. Victims should not have to suffer the consequences of their actions. However, to take personal conduct off the table is to denigrate the humanity of the poor. They have the power to make judgments about their conduct and their future. The freedom individuals have and the values by which they live remain significant contributors to economic life, even if they do not determine it. Values like thrift, sacrifice, job skill, and education are still important for the poor to possess. Although self-esteem is important, one builds self-esteem through building skill in accomplishing something in which one has interest. The failure of schools in poor communities to teach skills for living is not helping the poor elevate their economic condition. Although personal choice, character, and moral climate do not determine economic consequences, they do contribute to one's full participation in the economic life of modern society. All of this is in agreement with William Galston, assistant to Bill Clinton. He said that in order to avoid poverty, just do three things: finish high school, marry before having a child, and do not have that child until you are at least

twenty years old. Only eight percent of the people who do all three of those things wind up poor.

The rise of government programs does not seem to help. Illegitimacy and crime grew with the rapid growth of AFDC programs. The decline of the fathers in the African-American household is the largest single variant in this picture. Efforts to end discrimination and poverty must begin here, in a re-valuation of the importance of family for the incorporation of proper values for participation in modern society. The African-American community is an example of a sub-culture that has low trust, and therefore less ability to work together toward a common purpose. The cultural habits necessary to share norms and values so that people learn to work reasonably well together has not developed. Many ethnic communities, such as Chinese or Jewish communities, stick together and buy from each other. The black community has a lower rate of self-employment; an entrepreneurial class has not developed. The black community is thoroughly atomized, individuals finding it difficult to work together to raise families, make money, or petition city hall. If full-fledged individualism means the unwillingness or inability to subordinate one's individual inclinations to larger groups, the black community is one of the most individualistic segments of American society.

My interest in this chapter is not rhetoric about the poor. My interest is supporting an economic system that has shown itself as having the greatest ability to reduce poverty generally and improve the quality of life of those who are poor.

Sympathy for the downtrodden and compassion for those less fortunate than oneself is part of what makes a person moral. Compassion has its roots in the harsh reality of poverty, combined with respect for those persons. For example, genuine

compassion recognizes that some homes are poor and reasonably good and happy. Compassion recognizes the capacity of the poor to respond to the demands of life and challenging them to achieve independence and a better human life. It is vital that the poor fill their need for cash, food, housing, clothing, and health care. It is harmful to provide such necessities to them on a long-term basis. Well-meaning reformers who step in with some form of dole undermine their self-esteem and impair their capacity to thrive independently.

Compassion that genuinely helps the poor or underclass will have several components. One is re-connecting people to family, friends, and local community. Mentoring on a one to one basis is an important step. Those who help the poor need to give time, love, and counsel. Cases in which persons have severe problems with self-destructive behavior, such as alcohol, drugs, or general laziness, need a separate form of treatment from those who simply need motivation and skill. Frankly, any subsidizing of bad behavior by the government does not help the poor find their way out of poverty. When the poor see such behavior subsidized by government it discourages them from making needed changes in their lives. This fact recognizes that personal conduct, using one's freedom to make self-destructive choices, makes an important, even if not definitive, contribution to one's economic condition. Work is critical to building self-esteem and hope in the future. Consequently, work needs to be a condition for compassion, not because one is cruel, but because one has genuine compassion. The vision is that freedom from government support is important for future improvement of economic life. Escaping poverty is, in one sense, painfully simple: long hours, good morality, good work habits, and commitment to family. Compassion needs the balance of

challenging people to lead the best human life they can lead. For the hard cases (alcohol, drugs, and crime), some form of spiritual transformation is often necessary, a genuine conversion to a new form of life than that to which one had committed oneself. Such recognition that one has been in the wrong, and needs to have life made right, is not easy to achieve. With a purely secular or scientific program, it is almost impossible. In any case, those in need of help are able to make it, not because of a government check, but because others take an interest in them.

The only dependable route from poverty is to reorient oneself toward American civil and economic life: domestic life becomes important, involvement in places of employment and other civic institutions, and acceptance of the modest role one can play in the political world. Re-engagement with the culture involves attitudes like faith, hope, self-esteem, development of skill, and entering into contracts with others. To depart from the underclass requires movement to a different place in one's mind and heart that includes work, family, and faith. The poor must work harder than other classes to rise out of poverty. The maintenance of monogamous marriage and family is also an important part of rising out of poverty. Marriage is a consistent encouragement toward rising out of poverty. Further, faith in humanity, in oneself, and in the future, is an important part of the psychology of rising out of poverty. The poor need to have the same freedoms and opportunities, the values of family and faith, which are indispensable to all wealth and progress. What the underclass need is not handouts that fail to recognize their capacity to improve themselves. What they do need are mentors who teach by word and deed the value of respect for self, for others, and being part of society.

Relief is the aid people give to those hungry and oppressed. Development is the proper education people receive in the stewardship of the gifts they already have, leading to economically productive and healthy societies. Discussion of the economic community must occur within the context of the larger human and spiritual needs of human beings. Consequently, reliance upon the economic analysis provided by Marxism will always prove deficient, for it reduces the human being to the economic person. Further, the redistribution of wealth will not accomplish a moral purpose because it does not recognize the value of personal incentive, opportunity, creativity, economic freedom, and political freedom. Socialism is not a cure for excessive state control. It has never been good to the poor. Liberation theology in Latin America did a great service in drawing attention to the poor and the corrupt, pre-capitalist system that dominates there. The ultimate failure of liberation theology is that it thought socialism would cure poverty. It did not give fair attention to the power of capitalism to raise the poor and to help them become middle class. We have now learned that even people in countries with few national resources can achieve great material success. This happens when they organize around the principles of entrepreneurship, invention, and organization.

Utopian and ideological entrapment is a temptation to both the political Left and the political Right. Thus, poverty is not always a matter of justice that requires correction of the external forces of oppression and exploitation. Poverty may also arise from processes internal to a culture or subculture and to individuals in their patterns of belief and behavior. From the Christian perspective, then, relief and development best occur within the context of faith communities, recognizing that economic advances involve qualities that transcend the narrow concerns of economics. Further, from the biblical

perspective, family and personal property are so important that churches need to stand against any ideology that threatens either.

Marvin Olasky identifies seven "seals of good philanthropic practice." 1) The person helped needs to have ties restored to family, friends, and neighborhood. 2) The volunteer is expected to become deeply involved in those needing help. 3) Those deserving of help were separated from the alcoholic, cheater, or lazy, those unwilling to change. They were visited to be counseled and exhorted, but not to subsidize their behavior. 4) Discernment was necessary by the volunteer to spot potential fraud. It was self-defeating when the poor saw others whom they knew who did not deserve help who were nevertheless helped. 5) Work was viewed as critical to one's personal health. It was not assumed that everyone wanted to work. It was a non-negotiable condition of aid. 6) Freedom from government and the opportunity to work and worship were viewed as essential. With long hours and good morality and work habits, a family could escape poverty. 7) God. Spiritual transformation was the only thing that could change an alcoholic, addict or abuser into a productive, temperate citizen. People were reminded that they were created in God's image and that God had expectations of them. Charity was combined with challenge.

All of this assumes that one dimension of poverty is moral. It suggests that one ought to lead a life that supports self and family. To remove moral responsibility from the quality of a human life, including what one achieves with this time and this body, one ignores an important aspect of the solution of poverty.

The NASW's "Definition of Social Work" (approvingly repeated in the introductory text Social Work, published by Allyn and Bacon in 1995), asserts that the

first "end" of social-work practice is "helping people obtain tangible services"; it puts "counseling and psychotherapy" second. Another introductory text announces the giveaway mission in its title: *Social Welfare: A Response to Human Need* (Allyn and Bacon, 1994). Like so many of the textbooks, it downplays the idea that the poor should be expected to work for a living. Indeed, "work" is never mentioned as a solution to poverty. The book labels the belief "that each person should be responsible for meeting his or her own needs" as "rugged individualism" and dismisses it: "This situation is neither possible in contemporary society nor desirable in terms of optimal human growth and development." Privately, social workers will mention cases where welfare encourages idleness and other dysfunctional behavior like having babies one cannot support. However, in official pronouncements, social-work leaders avoid or dismiss the notion that benefit programs might be drawing vulnerable individuals into dependency and even ruin.

The emphasis on values has all but disappeared from modern social work. The orientation today is on not swaying welfare recipients in their choices. One value of social work, says John Brown's Handbook of Social Work Practice (Charles C. Thomas, 1992), is a "nonjudgmental attitude," which means, "social workers should not judge clients' behavior by imposing a moral value on it." The introductory text The Practice of Social Work (Dorsey Press, 1985) criticizes "the layperson's views that a social worker seeks to 'remold' clients into a pattern chosen by the worker." The professional view is that clients "should be permitted to determine their own lifestyles as far as possible."

"Social work assumes the inherent worth and importance of the individual," says the Introduction to Social Work (Prentice Hall, 1991). From this seemingly

unobjectionable premise, the authors reach a startlingly indulgent conclusion: "The person's worth is validated equally by his or her decision to achieve potential or to permit it to lie unused, by a decision to achieve or merely vegetate." The notion that social workers must be neutral paralyzes them as advisors or mentors.

The environment is a concern of those who want to eliminate poverty. The infrastructure of an area is important in this area, as government assures the presence of proper sanitary conditions, roads, water, and electricity. Government also has a responsibility to provide a clean and safe environment. However, consideration of such environmental factors does not release individuals from their responsibility to pursue the best life they can lead.

We need to be reminded that there are standard ways out of poverty. It does not involve government programs or government checks. It involves hard work, faith, character development, and commitment to family. In other words, no one can wave a magic wand. Such a long-term problem will require sacrifice and perseverance on the part of those who are poor. It is a matter of restraining the impulse to depend on someone else for one's support. The issue is not blame. It is a matter of taking responsibility for one's life, and moving forward with faith in the future.

Individuals are expected to use their freedom and abilities to develop themselves and further their own economic circumstances. The conclusion is inescapable: the present welfare system has neglected these realities. People need to be shown that their goal needs to be excellence, not equality, sameness, or fairness. We need self-reliance, morality, personal responsibility, hope, and confidence, to find a reasonable path out of poverty. In American history, the pioneer, who overcame obstacles and triumphed over

enormous odds, and worked hard, using freedom and creativity to earn a living, symbolizes this. It is the longing to make life better for oneself and family, not government, which will bring one to that goal of a reasonably happy life, with a moderate degree of wealth. The poor need such confidence building messages.

There is only one dependable way out of poverty. Unfortunately, some politicians and activists have led people to believe that the government is that way. Too many people who are already successful in their own way seem to believe that people cannot take care of themselves, especially if they are poor and uneducated. For these people, the more people whom they believe need government services, the better off they will be. They receive government aid, grants, and jobs. As government expands, their job opportunities expand. The United States has had such programs since the 1970's, and it seems government has made poverty worse; it has increasingly put poor families under pressure. This is typical of government programs. The greater amount of money spent, the lower are the results. It is true in education, health care, and anti-poverty programs. Very simply, government is not the way out of poverty. It is preferable to elevate most people to new heights rather than to equalize society by taking away from those who have succeeded. Yet, we seem committed to the path that has failed.

Milton Friedman has proposed present federal aid programs to the poor with a negative income tax. This program would use the portion of money that presently has an exemption from any taxes. Every family would receive an income subsidy from the government. In the end, if the income of a family is below the personal exemption, it receives a check from the government. The point is to replace the present federal

programs that require bureaucracy with a monthly check from the government to the family.

The alienating effects of materialistic consumption: greed and envy

Consumers should exercise their economic power to encourage the manufacture of goods that are necessary and beneficial to humanity while avoiding the desecration of the environment in either production or consumption. Consumers should avoid purchasing products made in conditions where workers are being exploited because of their age, gender, or economic status. Becoming an educated consumer makes one aware that one is part of an informal network of producers, workers, and consumers. Individual consumption choices affect the economic direction of society. Purchasing from companies that show some social responsibility encourages such behavior on the part of corporations. Consumers should evaluate their consumption of goods and services in the light of the need for enhanced quality of life rather than unlimited production of material goods.

I do not think anyone would question the statement that one major ways of participating in American society in a morally sick way is materialism and consumerism. I consider this manner of participation in American society a reflection of the quite human problems of greed and envy. Greed is an impediment to holiness. As John Wesley put it, greed is "destructive of that faith which is of the operation of God; of that hope which is full of immortality; of love of God and of our neighbor, and of every good word and work."[4] Good stewards of the good gifts we have received include care for the poor. John Wesley put it this way: "O let your heart be whole with God. Sit as loose to all

[4] John Wesley, "The Danger of Riches," I.11.

things here below as if you was a poor beggar. Be a god steward of the manifold gifts of God."[5] It did not take the coming of capitalism or American society to create greed or envy. Rather, human beings have the foolishness and sinfulness of placing their ultimate concern into finite things, thinking this will bring happiness. Citizens often observe ceaseless economic activity, the emphasis on wealth, fame, and work, and think that they will find a full and meaningful life by pursuing wealth. What citizens who take this approach often find is that grasping after things as if they will give ultimate value to oneself leads to emptiness.

Gambling is a particularly troubling menace to society, deadly to the best interests of moral, social, economic, and spiritual life, and destructive of good government. Society should promote standards and personal lifestyles that would make unnecessary and undesirable the resort to commercial gambling—including public lotteries—as a recreation, as an escape, or as a means of producing public revenue or funds for support of charities or government. Problem or compulsive gambling is an urge to gamble despite harmful negative consequences to the gambler, to others, or to the community. The risk of problem gambling is greater in fast-paced games, rather than in state run lotteries, where one must wait several days to discover a winner. Often, as debts build up, people turn to other sources of money, such as theft, or the sale of drugs. Abuse is common where pathological gambling is present. It leads to higher incidents of divorce. Only about 2-3% of Americans have gambling problems, as compared with 7% of Americans who have an alcohol problem. About one in twenty gamblers become problem gamblers.

This manner of participating in American society is the result of foolishness and sin. Without going into detail here, the sickness of soul that results from greed and envy

[5] John Wesley, "On Riches," II.12.

requires a physician of the soul. Here is a place for moral and religious reflection to lead us to a place ultimate trust in that which is larger than us.

One can grant that the consumer mentality has its dark side, as do all human endeavors. Its darkness consists in the subtle shift in thinking that life is about gaining everything I want. Yet, consumerism also means that every individual in the country becomes part of the economic plan of the country. Most of us do not purchase a good or service with this intent. Yet, the by-product of our choices as consumers moves the economic policy of the country in new directions all the time. An educated and informed consumer can even help move the country toward increasingly friendly decisions of business toward the environment. Buying "Fair Trade Certified" products is another way to be a responsible consumer. After all, the leaders of business must breathe the same air, drink the water, like to hunt and fish, and like the times when they can enjoy the mountains or the beaches. Consumers can have an influence through writing letters, boycotts, corporate resolutions, and advertisement.

For many people in our society today, greed is not so much a sin as a goal. A ball player offered two million dollars a year experiences offense because he does not get three million. A national survey asked what people would be willing to give up in order to get ten million dollars. Here are the options.

- Put your children up for adoption (3%).
- Become a prostitute for a week (23%).
- Give up your American citizenship (16%).
- Abandon your church (25%).
- Kill a stranger (7%).
- Have a sex change operation.
- Leave your spouse (16%).
- Change your race (6%).

What would we do? What are we doing? No one has offered us the chance for ten million dollars. We have had a chance to make a thousand, a hundred, or ten. The amount may not have been the same; the choices are. This makes the question even more disturbing. Some are willing to give up their family, faith, or morals for far less than ten million dollars.

The Christian tradition calls this greed. Greed equates a person's worth with a person's purse. You got a lot, so you are a lot. You got a little, so you are little. The consequence of such a philosophy is predictable. If we are the sum of what we own, then we might try to own it all. No price is too high. No payment is too much.

Envy is a little different. We become jealous of the happiness of another person. Envy calculates the comparison between what one has and what another has. Envy places competition into relationship in an inappropriate way. Envy lives with discontent. Envy is blind to the wonderful gifts that one has. Envy creates sadness, for one cannot be thankful.

How can anybody escape materialism, greed, and envy?

We are a nation consumed with consuming. Possessions seem to possess us. One might say that many Americans have an addiction to consumption. The average American, says *Time* magazine, spends $1300 for every $1000 they make! I am sure you have heard a little humor that goes like this. What do you call it when output exceeds input? Body builders call it overwork. Electricians call it overload. Bankers call it an overdraft. Politicians call it, What problem?

The Hunger for More: Searching for Values in an Age of Greed has on the cover, "More. If there is a single word that summarizes American hopes and obsessions that is

it -- More!" More money, more success, more luxuries, more gizmos. We live for more, whether for our next raise or our next house. The things we already have, however wonderful they are, pale in comparison to the things we might still get.

Some on the Left suggest that this hunger for more is unique to the rich, middle class, or the West. They point to the six percent of people in the world who live in the USA who consume one third of the resources of the world and view this as obscene. What they fail to perceive is that the obscenity lays in the failure of more nations to practice freedom in their politics and economics. If more were to do so, I am confident that changes in these percentages would go down dramatically.

Really, this quite modern hunger for more is nothing new. The desire to acquire is quite human, as the awareness of greed and envy in Christian tradition and other religious traditions suggest.

Advertising slogans suggest that the more we acquire, the happier we will be. People can buy into the lifestyle of trying to buy happiness. Happiness gained through acquiring more things is temporary. Andy Rooney said, "Having enough is nowhere near as much fun as I thought it was going to be when I didn't have any." A sign says, "When I first started working, I used to dream of the day I would earn the salary I am now starving on." There never seems to be enough.

Many people accept the idea that acquiring more things will make us more important. The reality is that money is an access to power that those who do not have it simply do not have. However, Americans need healing of this sickness. The misconception is, I am what I own, that my valuables determine my value, that if I have little then I must be worth little. Therefore, since I want others to like, respect, and look

up to me, I must continually keep on getting more and more and more. I have to keep up with the neighbors, even though they probably refinanced. The fact is, we buy things we do not need with money we do not have to impress people we do not even like! Net worth is not self-worth. A bumper sticker says, "The one who dies with the most toys wins." Another bumper sticker introduces a bit of reality into the situation, "He who dies with the most toys, dies."

We need to learn the gift of holding lightly the things of this world. Many Americans need to learn the gift of simplicity. To conclude this chapter, I remind us of an important teaching of Jesus.

> Luke 12:22-31 (NRSV)
> [22] He said to his disciples, “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. [23] For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. [24] Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! [25] And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? [26] If then you are not able to do so small a thing as that, why do you worry about the rest? [27] Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. [28] But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith! [29] And do not keep striving for what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying. [30] For it is the nations of the world that strive after all these things, and your Father knows that you need them. [31] Instead, strive for his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.

163

We claim all economic systems to be under the judgment of God no less than other facets of the created order. Therefore, we recognize the responsibility of governments to develop and implement sound fiscal and monetary policies that provide for the economic life of individuals and corporate entities and that ensure full employment and adequate incomes with a minimum of inflation. We believe private and public economic enterprises are responsible for the social costs of doing business, such as employment and

environmental pollution, and that they should be held accountable for these costs. We support measures that would reduce the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few. We further support efforts to revise tax structures and to eliminate governmental support programs that now benefit the wealthy at the expense of other persons.

The Book of Resolutions #206 has a concern for economic justice that focuses upon the concentration of wealth into the hands of a few and the growing disparity between rich and poor nations. In its view, corporations have become increasingly anonymous and unaccountable to their employees, to the communities, and to governments. #209 urges that the path to economic justice includes personal (recycling, organic, socially screened investments, and buy local), local paths (low income housing, affirmative action, equal opportunity, full rights for farm workers), national and global paths.

Property

We believe private ownership of property is a trusteeship under God, both in those societies where it is encouraged and where it is discouraged, but is limited by the overriding needs of society. We believe that Christian faith denies to any person or group of persons exclusive and arbitrary control of any other part of the created universe. Socially and culturally conditioned ownership of property is, therefore, to be considered a responsibility to God. We believe, therefore, governments have the responsibility, in the pursuit of justice and order under law, to provide procedures that protect the rights of the whole society as well as those of private ownership.

Collective Bargaining

We support the right of public and private (including farm, government, institutional, and domestic) employees and employers to organize for collective bargaining into unions and other groups of their own choosing. Further, we support the right of both parties to protection in so doing and their responsibility to bargain in good faith within the framework of the public interest. In order that the rights of all members of the society may be maintained and promoted, we support innovative bargaining procedures that include representatives of the public interest in negotiation and settlement of labor-management contracts, including some that may lead to forms of judicial resolution of

issues. We reject the use of violence by either party during collective bargaining or any labor/management disagreement. We likewise reject the permanent replacement of a worker who engages in a lawful strike.

Collective bargaining is the process whereby workers organize collectively and bargain with employers regarding the workplace. In various national labor and employment law contexts collective bargaining takes on a more specific legal meaning. In a broad sense, however, it is the coming together of workers to negotiate their employment. The Book of Resolutions #194 encourages a boycott of The Gannett Company, which owns USA Today, for its unjust working conditions. The Book of Resolutions #195 lays out the conditions under which any United Methodist organization may encourage a boycott. #196 recommends the boycott of Taco Bell until the company engages in talks with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers. #197 supports a boycott of the Mt. Olive Pickle Company for its treatment of migrant farm workers. #198 urges the boycott of Altria/Phillip Morris and RJR Nabisco due to their marketing of tobacco products to children.

A Collective agreement is a labor contract between an employer and one or more unions. Collective bargaining consists of the process of negotiation between representatives of a union and employers (represented by management, in some countries by employers' organization) in respect of the terms and conditions of employment of employees, such as wages, hours of work, working conditions and grievance-procedures, and about the rights and responsibilities of trade unions. The parties often refer to the result of the negotiation as a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) or as a Collective Employment Agreement (CEA).

One definition is that collective bargaining is a human right and thus deserving of legal protection. The right to organize trade unions is identified as a human right in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The International Labor Organization's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work defines Collective Bargaining as a core fundamental right of workers.

Recently the Supreme Court of Canada extensively reviewed the rationale for considering collective bargaining to be a human right. In the case of Health Services and Support — Facilities Subsector Bargaining Assn. v. British Columbia, [2007] SCC 27, decided on June 8, 2007, the Court made the following observations:

> "The right to bargain collectively with an employer enhances the human dignity, liberty and autonomy of workers by giving them the opportunity to influence the establishment of workplace rules and thereby gain some control over a major aspect of their lives, namely their work."
>
> "Collective bargaining is not simply an instrument for pursuing external ends...rather [it] is intrinsically valuable as an experience in self-government."
>
> "One of the fundamental achievements of collective bargaining is to palliate the historical inequality between employers and employees..."
>
> "Collective bargaining permits workers to achieve a form of workplace democracy and to ensure the rule of law in the workplace. Workers gain a voice to influence the establishment of rules that control a major aspect of their lives."

Work and Leisure

Every person has the right to a job at a living wage. Where the private sector cannot or does not provide jobs for all who seek and need them, it is the responsibility of government to provide for the creation of such jobs. We support social measures that ensure the physical and mental safety of workers, that provide for the equitable division of products and services, and that encourage an increasing freedom in the way individuals may use their leisure time.

We recognize the opportunity leisure provides for creative contributions to society and encourage methods that allow workers additional blocks of discretionary time. We support educational, cultural, and recreational outlets that enhance the use of such time. We believe that persons come before profits. We deplore the selfish spirit that often pervades our economic life. We support policies that encourage the sharing of ideas in

the workplace, cooperative and collective work arrangements. We support rights of workers to refuse to work in situations that endanger health and/or life without jeopardy to their jobs. We support policies that would reverse the increasing concentration of business and industry into monopolies.

The Book of Resolutions #217 supports all levels of the United Methodist Church to provide a living wage, adjusted for local cost of living and provide adequate health coverage for employees and dependents.

Consumption

Consumers should exercise their economic power to encourage the manufacture of goods that are necessary and beneficial to humanity while avoiding the desecration of the environment in either production or consumption. Consumers should avoid purchasing products made in conditions where workers are being exploited because of their age, gender, or economic status.

And while the limited options available to consumers make this extremely difficult to accomplish, buying “Fair Trade Certified” products is one sure way consumers can use their purchasing power to make a contribution to the common good. The International Standards of Fair Trade are based on ensuring livable wages for small farmers and their families, working with democratically run farming cooperatives, buying direct so that the benefits and profits from trade actually reach the farmers and their communities, providing vitally important advance credit, and encouraging ecologically sustainable farming practices. Consumers should not only seek out companies whose product lines reflect a strong commitment to these standards, but should also encourage expanded corporate participation in the Fair Trade market.

Consumers should evaluate their consumption of goods and services in the light of the need for enhanced quality of life rather than unlimited production of material goods. We call upon consumers, including local congregations and Church-related institutions, to organize to achieve these goals and to express dissatisfaction with harmful economic, social, or ecological practices through such appropriate methods as boycott, letter writing, corporate resolution, and advertisement. For example, these methods can be used to influence better television and radio programming.

The Fair Trade Certified Mark is a certification mark used in Canada and in the United States. It appears on products as an independent guarantee that disadvantaged producers in the developing world are getting a better deal. The Fair Trade Certified Mark is the North American equivalent of the International Fairtrade Certification Mark

used in 17 countries in Europe, Asia, Australia and New Zealand. The Book of Resolutions #199 urges the use of fair Trade Coffee in the United Methodist Church.

For a product to carry either Certification Marks, it must come from FLO-CERT inspected and certified producer organizations. The crops must be grown and harvested in accordance with the International Fairtrade standards set by FLO International. The supply chain is also monitored by FLO-CERT to ensure the integrity of labelled products. Only TransFair USA or TransFair Canada licensees can use the Fair Trade Certified Mark on their products.

Fairtrade certification (usually simply Fairtrade or Fair Trade Certified™ in the United States) is a product certification system designed to allow people to identify products which meet agreed environmental, labour and developmental standards. Overseen by a standard-setting body, FLO International, and a certification body, FLO-CERT, the system involves independent auditing of producers to ensure the agreed standards are met. Companies offering products that meet the Fairtrade standards may apply for licences to use the Fairtrade Certification Mark for those products.

The FLO International Fairtrade certification system covers a growing range of products, including bananas, honey, oranges, cocoa, cotton, dried and fresh fruits and vegetables, juices, nuts and oil seeds, quinoa, rice, spices, sugar, tea and wine.

As most developmental efforts, fair trade has proved itself controversial and has drawn criticism from both ends of the political spectrum. Some economists and conservative think tanks see fair trade as a type of subsidy that impedes growth. Segments of the left criticize fair trade for not adequately challenging the current trading system.

In 2006, Fairtrade-certified sales amounted to approximately €1.6 billion worldwide, a 41 % year-to-year increase. Sales are further expected to grow significantly in the coming years: according to the 2005 Just-Food Global Market Review, Fairtrade sales should reach US$ 9 billion in 2012 and US$ 20-25 billion by 2020.

As per December 2006, 569 producer organizations in 58 developing countries were FLO-CERT Fairtrade-certified.

The International Fair Trade Association (IFAT) was created in 1989 and is a global association of nearly 300 organizations in over 60 countries. Members are Fair Trade producer cooperatives and associations, export marketing companies, importers, retailers, national and regional Fair Trade networks and Fair Trade Support Organizations. IFAT's mission is to improve the livelihoods and well being of disadvantaged producers by linking and promoting Fair Trade Organizations, and speaking out for greater justice in world trade. IFAT's core fields of activities are:

Developing the market for Fair Trade.
Building trust in Fair Trade.
Speaking out for Fair Trade.
Providing networking opportunities
Empowering the regions.

In 2004 IFAT launched the FTO Mark which identifies registered fair trade organizations worldwide (as opposed to products in the case of FLO International and Fairtrade) and guarantees that standards are being implemented regarding working conditions, wages, child labor and the environment. These standards are verified by self-assessment, mutual reviews and external verification. The FTO Mark is available to all IFAT members who meet the requirements of the IFAT Standards and Monitoring System and so far over 150 organizations have registered.

One criticism of this movement comes from those devoted to free enterprise. An economy works best when prices are the direct reflection of supply and demand, not politically motivated and artificially determined. Similar to other farm subsidies, fair trade attempts to set a price floor for a good that is in many cases above the market price and therefore encourages existing producers to produce more and new producers to enter the market, leading to excess supply. As fair trade opponents argue, under free trade, an excessively low price sends a signal for producers to switch to more productive economic activities. For example, an extremely low coffee price would signal coffee growers to switch to new crops or completely new industries. Though the adjustment progress is difficult, this creative destruction is a core component of economic growth. By stopping price signals, fair trade encourages inefficient activities that will not lift the world's poor out of poverty. In 2003, Cato Institute senior fellow Brink Lindsey referred to fair trade as a “well intentioned, interventionist scheme...doomed to end in failure." Fair trade, according to Lindsey, is a misguided attempt to make up for market failures in which one flawed pricing structure is replaced with another.

Studies of consumption investigate how and why society and individuals consume goods and services, and how this affects society and human relationships. Contemporary studies focus on meanings, role of consumption in identity making, and the 'consumer' society. Traditionally, consumption was seen as rather unimportant compared to production, and the political and economic issues surrounding it. With the development of a consumer society, increasing consumer power in the market place, the growth in marketing, advertising, sophisticated consumers, ethical consumption etc, it is recognised as central to modern life. Sociology of consumption has moved well beyond Veblen's

early work on 'conspicuous' consumption. Current theories investigate the role of economic and cultural factors in constraining consumption, as development of an approach that sees consumers as 'victims' of producers and their social situation. A counter theory highlights the subversive aspects of consumption, with consumers buying and using goods, places etc in ways unintended by the producers. Examples include city squares turned to skateboard parks, and music sharing on the internet.

Studies of consumption come from a variety of backgrounds. Consumer studies attempt to help marketing. User research aims to improve product design. Feminist studies highlight the importance of women as consumers, and particularly the role of the domestic arena in consumption. Media studies try to understand the consumption of media products such as television and video games. Critical Theory is an important influence on contemporary studies, as consumption is central to contemporary culture.

Studying consumption can be done through traditional survey methods, or various ethnographic techniques. Consumption studies are difficult because they involve investigating everyday life situations, bringing research into the private domain, rather than formalized settings such as the workplace.

Poverty

In spite of general affluence in the industrialized nations, the majority of persons in the world live in poverty. In order to provide basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, education, health care, and other necessities, ways must be found to share more equitably the resources of the world. Increasing technology, when accompanied by exploitative economic practices, impoverishes many persons and makes poverty self-perpetuating.

Therefore, we do not hold poor people morally responsible for their economic state. To begin to alleviate poverty, we support such policies as: adequate income maintenance, quality education, decent housing, job training, meaningful employment opportunities, adequate medical and hospital care, and humanization and radical revisions of welfare programs.

Since low wages are often a cause of poverty, employers should pay their employees a wage that does not require them to depend upon government subsidies such as food stamps or welfare for their livelihood.

Migrant Workers

Migratory and other farm workers, who have long been a special concern of the Church's ministry, are by the nature of their way of life excluded from many of the economic and social benefits enjoyed by other workers. Many of the migrant laborers' situations are aggravated because they are racial and ethnic minority persons who have been oppressed with numerous other inequities within the society.

We advocate for the rights of all migrants and applaud their efforts toward responsible self-organization and self-determination. We call upon governments and all employers to ensure for migratory workers the same economic, educational, and social benefits enjoyed by other citizens.

We call upon our churches to seek to develop programs of service to such migrant people who come within their parish and support their efforts to organize for collective bargaining.

Book of Resolutions #265 and #266 rejects the 1996 Immigration Act and California proposition 187, based upon the biblical idea of the sojourner and hospitality.

A foreign worker is a person who works in a country other than the one of which he or she is a citizen. The term migrant worker as discussed in the Migrant worker page is used in a particular UN resolution as a synonym for "foreign worker". In nations that have yet to ratify this resolution such as the United States the term "Migrant Worker" is not synonymous with Foreign Worker.

The term foreign worker delineates into two specific cases. Green card workers are individuals who have requested and received legal permanent residence in the United States and who intend to work in the United States on a permanent basis. Guest workers are persons who typically travel (either legally or illegally) to a country with much more preferred job prospects than the one in which they currently reside. These "workers"

temporarily reside in the country in which they work and will often send most or all wages earned, back to their country of origin (usually to a family).

There is little, if any, controversy concerning green card workers. In recent years in the United States, there has been much controversy over whether H-1B visas (a particular instance of guest worker), intended to bring highly skilled workers to fill gaps in the domestic labor pool, are instead being used to bring in skilled, but otherwise unexceptional, economic migrants as cheap labor to fill jobs that could readily be filled domestically. There is much controversy over pending legislation that would allow unskilled labor to enter the country for this same reason. Again, specific to the H-1B visas, Third World countries such as India, Pakistan, and the Philippines have long experienced a brain drain of highly skilled workers to countries like the United States, France, Britain, Canada, France, Germany, and Australia. While the absolute number of such émigrés are not large, the economic implications of such very skilled workers are significant.

Sometimes, citizens of countries with heavily urbanized areas have migrated to more agrarian countries in order to find jobs as farmers and such.

In certain less tolerant nations, foreign workers may be abused and treated as second-class citizens by the governments and/or lack of unions to assert worker rights. For instance, in many Asian nations, it is common for employers to withhold passports from their employees, thus preventing the foreign worker from returning home. In conjunction with the withholding of salaries, it is meant to put the foreign workers in very difficult situation (particularly because the laws of these countries are typically not

sympathetic to foreigners in practice). In the UK organizations such as Kalayaan protect the rights of UK migrant domestic workers.

In the United States, the term “migrant worker” is most commonly used to describe low-wage workers performing manual labor in the agriculture field. Today in Europe and the United States, many immigrants who are not working on valid work visas. The United States has enacted the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act - 29 U.S. Code Chapter 21to remove the restraints on commerce caused by activities detrimental to migrant and seasonal agricultural workers; to require farm labor contractors to register; and to assure necessary protections for migrant and seasonal agricultural workers, agricultural associations, and agricultural employers.

The term migrant worker sometimes may be used to describe any worker who moves from one seasonal job to another. This use is generally confined to lower-wage fields, perhaps because the term has been indelibly linked with low-wage farmworkers and illegal immigrants. Examples of professions that could be called migrant workers, some of them quite lucrative, include: Electricians in the construction industry; other construction workers who travel from one construction job to another, often in different cities; wildland firefighters in the western United States; temporary/roving consulting work; and possibly even interstate truck drivers.

In America's history, starting at the end of the American Civil War, hobos were the migrant workers who performed much of this agricultural work, using freight railroads as their means of transportation to new jobs. During the collapse of capitalism in the Great Depression, so-called Okies who fled the dust bowl were a significant source of temporary farm labor. Cf. The Grapes of Wrath.

It is also used currently for workers from China's impoverished west who go to work in the more prosperous east. People like Wang Binyu, whose case became newsworthy in 2005.

Gambling

Gambling is a menace to society, deadly to the best interests of moral, social, economic, and spiritual life, and destructive of good government. As an act of faith and concern, Christians should abstain from gambling and should strive to minister to those victimized by the practice.

Where gambling has become addictive, the Church will encourage such individuals to receive therapeutic assistance so that the individual's energies may be redirected into positive and constructive ends.

The Church should promote standards and personal lifestyles that would make unnecessary and undesirable the resort to commercial gambling—including public lotteries—as a recreation, as an escape, or as a means of producing public revenue or funds for support of charities or government.

Because many religious authorities generally disapprove of gambling to some extent, and because gambling can have adverse social consequences, most legal jurisdictions limit gambling to some extent. Some Islamic nations prohibit gambling; most other countries regulate it.

Many jurisdictions, local as well as national, either ban or heavily control (by licensing) gambling. Such regulation generally leads to gambling tourism and illegal gambling. The involvement of governments, through regulation and taxation, has led to a close connection between many governments and gaming organizations, where legal gambling provides significant government revenue, such as in Monaco or Macau.

Under US federal law, gambling is legal in the United States, and states are free to regulate or prohibit the practice. Gambling has been legal in Nevada since 1931, forming the backbone of the state's economy, and the city of Las Vegas is perhaps the best known gambling destination in the world. In 1976, gambling was legalized in Atlantic City, New

Jersey, and in 1990, it was legalized in Tunica, Mississippi; both of those cities have developed extensive casino and resort areas since then. Since a favorable US Supreme Court decision in 1987, many Native American tribes have built their own casinos on tribal lands as a way to provide revenue for the tribe. Because the tribes are considered sovereign nations, they are often exempt from state laws banning gambling, and are instead regulated under federal law.

Because contracts of insurance have many features in common with wagers, insurance contracts are often distinguished under law as agreements in which either party has an interest in the "bet-upon" outcome beyond the specific financial terms. E.g.: a “bet” with an insurer on whether one's house will burn down is not gambling, but rather insurance — as the homeowner has an obvious interest in the continued existence of his/her home independent of the purely financial aspects of the "bet" (i.e., the insurance policy).

There is generally legislation requiring that the odds in gaming devices are statistically random, to prevent manufacturers from making some high-payoff results impossible. Since these high-payoffs have very low probability, a house bias can quite easily be missed unless checking the odds carefully.

Problem gambling is an urge to gamble despite harmful negative consequences or a desire to stop. The term is preferred to compulsive gambling among many professionals, as few people described by the term experience true compulsions in the clinical sense of the word. Problem gambling often is defined by whether harm is experienced by the gambler or others, rather than by the gambler's behavior. Severe

problem gambling may be diagnosed as clinical pathological gambling if the gambler meets certain criteria.

There has been much debate over how problem gambling should be defined. Research by governments in Australia led to a universal definition for that country which appears to be the only research based definition not to use diagnostic criteria.

> "Problem gambling is characterized by many difficulties in limiting money and/or time spent on gambling which leads to adverse consequences for the gambler, others, or for the community."

Most other definitions of problem gambling can usually be simplified to any gambling that cause harm to the gambler or someone else in any way, however these definitions are usually coupled with descriptions of the type of harm or the use of diagnostic criteria such as the South Oaks Gambling Screen or Canadian Problem Gambling Index.

Problem gambling can arise from a mental disorder, or even have a biological basis. As debts build up people turn to other sources of money such as theft, or the sale of drugs. A lot of this pressure comes from bookies or loan sharks that people rely on for capital to gamble with. Also, a teenager that does not receive treatment for pathological gambling when in their desperation phase is likely to contemplate suicide. 20% of teenagers that are pathological gamblers do consider suicide. This according to the article High Stakes: Teens Gambling With Their Futures by Laura Paul.

Abuse is also common in homes where pathological gambling is present. Growing up in such a situation leads to improper emotional development and increased risk of falling prey to problem gambling behavior.

Pathological gambling is similar to many other impulse control disorders such as kleptomania, pyromania, and trichotillomania. Other mental diseases that also exhibit

impulse control disorder include such mental disorders as antisocial personality disorder, or schizophrenia.

Other problems associated with compulsive gambling can be personal relationships. In a 1991 study of relationships of American men, it was found that 10% of compulsive gamblers had been married three or more times. Only 2% of men who did not gamble were married more than twice.

According to a variety of sources, the prevalence (i.e., extent of existing cases) of problem gambling is 2-3% and pathological gambling is 1% in the United States. For comparison, about 7% of Americans have an alcohol problem. Gamblers Anonymous has estimated that about one in twenty gamblers eventually becomes a problem or pathological (compulsive) gambler.

Available research seems to indicate that problem gambling is an internal tendency, and that problem gamblers will tend to risk money on whatever game is available, rather than a particular game being available inducing problem gambling in otherwise "normal" individuals. However, research also indicates that problem gamblers tend to risk money on fast-paced games. Thus, a problem gambler is much more likely to lose a lot of money on poker or slot machines, where rounds end quickly and there is a constant temptation to play again or increase bets, as opposed to a state lottery where the gambler must wait until the next drawing to see results.

Family Farms

The value of family farms has long been affirmed as a significant foundation for free and democratic societies. In recent years, the survival of independent farmers worldwide has been threatened by various factors, including the increasing concentration of all phases of agriculture into the hands of a limited number of transnational

corporations. The concentration of the food supply for the many into the hands of the few raises global questions of justice that cry out for vigilance and action.

We call upon the agribusiness sector to conduct itself with respect for human rights primarily in the responsible stewardship of daily bread for the world, and secondarily in responsible corporate citizenship that respects the rights of all farmers, small and large, to receive a fair return for honest labor. We advocate for the rights of people to possess property and to earn a living by tilling the soil.

We call upon our churches to do all in their power to speak prophetically to the matters of food supply and the people who grow the food for the world.

A family farm is a farm owned and operated by a family, and passed down from generation to generation. It is the basic unit of the mostly agricultural economy of much of human history and continues to be so in developing nations. Alternatives to family farms include those run by agribusiness, colloquially known as factory farms, or by collective farming.

In agriculture, agribusiness is a generic term that refers to the various businesses involved in food production, including farming, seed supply, agrichemicals, farm machinery, wholesale and distribution, processing, marketing, and retail sales. The term has two distinctly different connotations depending on context.

Within the agriculture industry, agribusiness is widely used simply as a convenient portmanteau of agriculture and business, referring to the range of activities and disciplines encompassed by modern food production. There are academic degrees in and departments of agribusiness, agribusiness trade associations, agribusiness publications, and so forth, worldwide. Here, the term is only descriptive, and is synonymous in the broadest sense with food industry.

Among critics of large-scale, industrialized, vertically integrated food production, the term agribusiness is used as a negative, synonymous with corporate farming. As such, it is often contrasted with family farm. Some negative connotation is also derived from

the negative associations of "business" and "corporation" from critics of capitalism or corporate excess.

Corporate farming is a term that describes the business of agriculture, specifically, what is seen by some as the practices of would-be megacorporations involved in food production on a very large scale. It is a modern food industry issue, and encompasses not only the farm itself, but also the entire chain of agriculture-related business, including seed supply, agrichemicals, food processing, machinery, storage, transport, distribution, marketing, advertising, and retail sales. The term also includes the influence of these companies on education, research and public policy, through their educational funding and government lobbying efforts. Corporate farming is often used synonymously with agribusiness (although agribusiness quite often is not used in the corporate farming sense), and it is seen as the destroyer of the family farm. Two percent of all farms in the United States are owned by corporations or other non-family entities, but only half of those farms earn more than $50,000 per year.[1]

Critics argue that the ultimate goal of corporate farming is to integrate vertically the entire process of food production, from the development of proprietary strains of DNA through to the distribution and sale of food to consumers. Some corporations are considered to be well on the way to achieving this objective, and have become very large in the process, such as Archer Daniels Midland and the privately held Cargill, with 2004 revenues of $62.9 billion.

Corporate farming is a fairly broad term that deals with the general practices and effects of a small number of large, global corporations that dominate the food industry. It does not refer simply to any incorporated agribusiness enterprise, although most

agricultural businesses today are in some way economically connected to the dominant food industry players. As such, it may be thought of as a movement, which is at times also referred to as anti-corporate farming.

Corporate farming is criticized for its tendency to concentrate food production, through the adoption of methods that are designed to maximize crop yield. At the same time, through a process of vertical integration, corporate farming results in the concentration of not only ownership of the means of production, but also the distribution and sale of food that is produced. Over time, this has resulted in the steady decrease of the number of farms and the percentage of independent farmers. Those farmers who cannot compete or whose businesses are purchased are no longer able to make independent production decisions, and are forced to sign production contracts with corporations. This is essentially an anti-monopolist criticism.

Farms are expensive to operate; input costs include farm machinery, crop insurance, fertilizers, irrigation, pesticides, fuel, and seeds. Some people question whether small family farms are still economically sustainable in the United States. However, there is a growing resurgence of interest in organic, free range, and locally grown family farm products.

One major difference between independent farming and corporate farming is that a corporate farmer is usually a contracted employee, rather than the owner of the farm. However, ownership itself does not mean independence. An owner-operated farm today faces many constraints that are completely out of the owner's control. Most of these can be seen in light of increasing concentration of ownership, not only of farms, but of the equipment and inputs necessary to farm, and the available sales channels.

Production contracts are a primary means of control and vertical integration of family farms. These are of two general types. Production management contracts specify the methods farmers must use. Resource-providing contracts require the contractor to also provide materials (e.g) and equipment. Under the latter, increasingly prevalent arrangement, the family farm owns its land and "sells" its output, but retains no real decision making control over the essential farming activities, like crop selection, equipment purchase, production methods, sales channels, and buyers.

A prime example is the drive to improve constantly production efficiency, as measured by farm output. By using successive waves of new technology (in agrichemicals, mechanization, crop varieties, drugs, etc), output has steadily risen over the past decades. This in turn has contributed to steadily driving down the price farmers can get for their output, and driving up the cost (to the farmer) of production. As the cost of remaining in production rises, and income falls, only the larger business entities, with the ability to profit from outside of the immediate farming activities (such as through financial services, agrichemical production, food distribution, and so forth) can afford to remain in the game.

The core argument for the methods criticized as corporate farming is essentially: "This is the way to keep up with population growth, and to make inroads into feeding billions of people to developed nation standards—this is the only way to feed the world." Indeed, rapid technological development and large-scale global production management are responsible for an unprecedented abundance of inexpensive, widely available, attractive, "safe" food. By lowering the cost of raw food inputs, creating sophisticated long-distance distribution networks, producing processed convenience foods, and making

food available year-round in vastly stocked supermarkets, corporate farming has presented consumers in the wealthiest regions of the world with an immense variety of food, at relatively low cost. Today, in North America, only about 10% of average income is spent on food. By this measure, provided these methods are sustainable, corporate farming would appear to be a tremendous success.

In developed nations, the family farm is viewed sentimentally, as a lifestyle to be preserved for tradition's sake, or as a birthright. It is in these nations very often a political rallying cry against change in agricultural policy, most commonly in France, Japan, and the United States, where rural lifestyles are often regarded as desirable.

Bolder promoters argue that as agriculture has become more efficient with the application of modern management and new technologies in each generation, the idealized classic family farm is now simply "obsolete", or more often, unable to compete without the economies of scale available to larger and more modern farms. Advocates argue that family farms in all nations need to be protected, as the basis of rural society and social stability.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, ninety-eight percent of all farms in the U.S. are family farms. Two percent of farms are not family farms, and those two percent make up fourteen percent of total agricultural output in the United States, although half of them have total sales of less than $50,000 per year. Overall, ninety-one percent of farms in the United States are considered "small family farms" (with sales of less than $250,000 per year), and those farms produce twenty-seven percent of U.S. agricultural output.

Individual farmers opted for successive waves of new technology, happily "trading in their horses for a tractor", increasing their debt and their production capacity. This in turn required larger, more distant markets, and heavier and more complex financing. The public willingly purchased increasingly commodified, processed, shipped and relatively inexpensive food. The availability of an increasingly diverse supply of fresh, uncured, unpreserved produce and meat in all seasons of the year (oranges in January, freshly killed steers in July, fresh pork rather than salted, smoked, or postassium-impregnated ham) opened an entirely new cuisine and an unprecedented healthy diet to millions of consumers who had never enjoyed such produce before. For the family farm, however, this new technology and increasingly complex marketing strategy posed new and unprecedented challenges, and not all family farmers were in a position to exploit it.

It is arguable whether any sort of "idyllic" life existed for most of the millions of family farms that have disappeared in recent decades. At the beginning of 20th century, an average farm in North America produced much less food per acre than it does nowadays. A likely conclusion is that for a time in the middle decades of the last century, a large number of farms achieved a temporarily comfortable position by capitalizing on rapidly emerging new technologies, markets, and growth-oriented philosophies. As growth and "production efficiency" kept increasing, this position began to reverse noticeably, at least by the 1970s. The number of farms, and of farm families living on the land, has dropped every decade in the United States since 1920. In part this was a function of economies of scale and competitive pressures. In part it may be perceived as an indication that "family farming", in its raw, realistic form, is just plain hard work, with

limited social and cultural opportunities, and competes poorly as an occupation and a "lifestyle" with urban and suburban opportunities.

In the current situation, for the independent "family farmer" to regain any sort of practical economic independence, it would seem necessary that the entire food industry be restructured. Furthermore, given the extreme number of defunct family farms, it is not so much a matter of saving or preserving the family farm (whatever it was, it is effectively already gone), but of using the remaining knowledge, expertise and farms as the framework for the "new family farm." A serious question, however, is whether the entire food system should be "restructured" in order to preserve a failed or perhaps mythological ideal, or whether the population of the world, now approaching 7 billion people, will be sustained by a return to land-extensive farming and local mom and pop marketing practices.

In the last few decades there has been a resurgence of interest in organic and free range foods. A percentage of consumers have begun to question the viability of industrial agriculture practices and have turned to organic groceries that sell products produced on family farms including not only meat and produce but also such things as wheat germ breads and natural lye soaps (as opposed to bleached white breads and petroleum based detergent bars). Others buy these products direct from family farms. The "new family farm" provides an alternative market in some localities with an array of traditionally and naturally produced products.

Such "organic" and "free-range" farming is attainable where a significant number of affluent urban and suburban consumers willingly pay a premium for the ideals of "locally produced produce" and "humane treatment of animals". The relationship of this

to "family farming" is more a marketing construct and an article of faith than of economic reality. Only rarely can such a farm, on the idyllic small scale professedly preferred by consumers, support the economic needs of a family wholly dependent on farm income. More often, these farms are hobby or part-time ventures, or supported by wealth from other sources. Viable farms on a scale sufficient to support modern families at an income level commensurate with urban and suburban upper middle class families are by their very nature large-scale operations, both in area and capital requirements. These farms, family owned and operated in a technologically and economically sophisticated manner, produce crops and animal products oriented to national and international markets, rather than to romantic notions of small scale or "natural" agriculture.

Corporate Responsibility

Corporations are responsible not only to their stockholders, but also to other stakeholders: their workers, suppliers, vendors, customers, the communities in which they do business, and for the earth, which supports them. We support the public's right to know what impact corporations have in these various arenas, so that people can make informed choices about which corporations to support.

We applaud corporations that voluntarily comply with standards that promote human well-being and protect the environment.

Corporate Responsibility is a term that has come to characterize a family of professional disciplines that help a corporation stay competitive by maintaining accountability to its four main stakeholder groups: customers, employees, shareholders, and communities. The professional disciplines included in the Corporate Responsibility field include: legal and financial compliance, business ethics, corporate social responsibility, public and community affairs, investor relations, stakeholder

communications, brand management, environmental affairs, sustainability, socially responsible investing, and corporate philanthropy.

Social responsibility is a doctrine that claims that an entity whether it is state, government, corporation, organization or individual has a responsibility to society. Among these entities, activist groups and local communities can also be associated with social responsibility, not only business or governmental entities. This responsibility can be "negative," in that it is a responsibility to refrain from acting (resistance stance) or it can be "positive," meaning there is a responsibility to act(proactive stance).

There is a large inequality in the means and roles of different entities to fulfill their claimed responsibility. This would imply the different entities have different responsibilities, insomuch as states should ensure the civil rights of their citizens, that corporations should respect and encourage the human rights of their employees and that citizens should abide with written laws. But social responsibility can mean more than these examples. Many NGOs accept that their role and the responsibility of their members as citizens is to help improve society by taking a proactive stance in their societal roles. It can also imply that corporations have an implicit obligation to give back to society (such as is claimed as part of corporate social responsibility and/or stakeholder theory).

Social responsibility is voluntary; it is about going above and beyond what is called for by the law (legal responsibility). It involves an idea that it is better to be proactive toward a problem rather than reactive to a problem. Social responsibility means eliminating corrupt, irresponsible or unethical behavior that might bring harm to the community, its people, or the environment before the behavior happens.

Corporate Social Responsibility is a concept that encourages organizations to consider the interests of society by taking responsibility for the impact of the organization's activities on customers, employees, shareholders, communities and the environment in all aspects of its operations. This obligation is seen to extend beyond the statutory obligation to comply with legislation and sees organizations voluntarily taking further steps to improve the quality of life for employees and their families as well as for the local community and society at large.

While many businesses have always behaved in a responsible manner, the debate

reporting guidelines. Sustainability reporting is the action where an organization publicly communicates their economic, environmental, and social performance. The GRI's mission is to make sustainability reporting by all organizations as routine and comparable as financial reporting. The GRI Guidelines are the most common framework used in the world for reporting. More than 1000 organizations from 60 countries use the Guidelines to produce their sustainability reports. (View the world's reporters at the GRI Reports database). All sorts of organizations report using the GRI Guidelines, such as corporate businesses, public agencies, smaller enterprises, NGOs, industry groups and others. The GRI was formed by the United States based non-profits Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies (CERES) and Tellus Institute, with the support of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in 1997. It released an "exposure draft" version of the Sustainability Reporting Guidelines in 1999, the first full version in 2000, the second version was released at the World Summit for Sustainable Development in Johannesburg – where the organization and the Guidelines were also referred to in the Plan of Implementation signed by all attending member states. Later that year it became a permanent institution, with its Secretariat in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Although the GRI is independent, it remains a collaborating centre of UNEP and works in cooperation with the United Nations Global Compact.

Most people will agree that businesses need to have in mind good social conditions and concern for preservation of the environment. Businesses depend upon their natural world and social context as much as individuals do. However, we need to consider the possibility that businesses need to focus upon their core competency.

Further, care for the environment increases as technology increases as a natural growth of concern for the quality of life.

The professional ethics that may exist within professions, if reduced to propositions, would be imprecise and difficult to formulate. It does not have the moderating action of any rules. For this reason, economic forces continue to react to each other.

Trade and Investment

We affirm the importance of international trade and investment in an interdependent world. Trade and investment should be based on rules that support the dignity of the human person, a clean environment and our common humanity. Trade agreements must include mechanisms to enforce labor rights and human rights as well as environmental standards. Broad-based citizen advocacy and participation in trade negotiations must be ensured through democratic mechanisms of consultation and participation.

The quantity of everything brought to market naturally suits itself to the demand. Producers have an interest that they not use their wealth to produce anything in excess of the demand. It is in the interest of all people that the good or service not falls below demand. Competition makes sure that this happens. An invisible hand guides this rather chaotic process. The worker wants to get as much as possible, and the owner wants to give as little as possible. Workers will want to combine to receive the highest wage possible. Producers will seek in subtle ways to keep wages down. The balance of trade is a non-issue. The receiving country benefits by receiving the products, and the country with the products benefits by selling them. The concept that trade with a particular country even can be balanced is absurd. We often impose tariffs because of the imbalance of trade. When two places trade with each other, this doctrine supposes that, if the balance is even, neither of them loses or gains. However, if an imbalance exists, one

loses and the other gains. Only trade forced by monopoly could have such an effect. Two-way trade is always advantageous equally to both. Commerce, which ought to create bonds of friendship, has become the source of hatred and animosity. The ambition of political leaders leads to fatal jealously of merchants and manufacturers. The violence and injustice of the rulers of humanity is an ancient evil. Humanity does not have a remedy for this. The wealth of a neighboring nation is dangerous in war, but advantageous in trade. In trade, no country ought to grant favors to any country for a product. That exchange of commodities which free trade promises so greatly to increase, will ultimately have the effect of specializing, in a greater or less degree, the industry of each nation. Even the most remote and homogenous of tribes, the progress is toward connection with the whole human race. Just as each society becomes increasingly specialized and heterogeneous, the separate functions assumed by the many kinds of makers and traders in each town, and the separate functions assumed by the workers united in producing each commodity, so will each nation becoming specialized. Thus, as some jobs migrate to other nations, still other jobs become possible.

The Political Community

As is true with most religions, Christians affirm that their ultimate allegiance is to God. Yet, Christians also affirm allegiance to the government that has the responsibility of providing for public order.

The following are some of the basic responsibilities that governments have in a free society.

Governments ought to respect the right of every person to life. It ought to respect this right by law. It ought not to allow the arbitrary deprivation of life.

Governments ought to respect the liberty of its citizens. As such, no one within the country should be held in slavery. Every government ought to prohibit slavery and the slave trade. No one should serve another because of forced labor.

Governments are responsible for the protection of the rights of the people to free and fair elections. They are responsible for the protection of the rights of the people to the freedoms of speech, religion, assembly, communications media, and petition for redress of grievances without fear of reprisal. They are responsible for the protection of the rights of the people to the right to privacy. Governments are responsible for the protection of the rights of the people to access to adequate food, clothing, shelter, education, and health care. Governments ought not to engage in domestic surveillance and intimidation of political opponents. The use of detention and imprisonment for the harassment and elimination of political opponents or other dissidents violates fundamental human rights. Furthermore, the mistreatment or torture of persons by governments for any purpose violates our common humanity. All moral human beings ought to regard slavery as evil.

The strength of a political system depends upon the full and willing participation of its citizens. Religious communities and individuals have the same right as all others to participate in decisions, especially in engaging the government in moral reflection.

The separation of the church from the state means no organic union of the two. Theocracy is not option. Promoting one religion over another is not option. Prayer in schools tends to promote a religion, and thus ought not to be an option. However, religiously motivated individuals and religious institutions have every right to interact with political authorities. The separation of church and sate has served the cause of religious liberty. However, this separation does not mean the abolition of all religious expression from public life.

Citizens have the right to information from government deliberations in due order and process.

Citizens have the right to education, the responsibility of which rests with family, religious communities, and the government. In American, public education has proved itself an important part educating citizens. Private schools are also important in education of citizens. Freedom of choice in the arena of education is a freedom that the government has the right to protect. As important as education is, financial barriers ought to removed as much as possible.

Citizens have the right of dissent from government decisions, although violence ought not to be an option in a free society. Such dissent ought to show respect for the laws, since the people have elected their officials to office.

As part of a system of justice, the death penalty is a tool that governments ought to ban. It denies the possibility of redemption and reconciliation. It shows no respect for

the life of the person executed, thereby disrespecting the convict, just as the convict disrespected the life of his or her victim.

As part of the system of justice, an important role for government is to protect all persons from encroachment upon their personal and property rights. Everyone has the right to liberty. Therefore, no government should deprive people of their liberty through arbitrary arrest or detention. For such reasons, governments have established mechanisms of law enforcement and courts. A wide array of sentencing options serves to express community outrage, incapacitate dangerous offenders, deter crime, and offer opportunities for rehabilitation. Government ought to design its justice measures to reduce and eliminate crime, consistent with respect for the basic freedom of persons. Therefore, discrimination and persecution are misuses of these mechanisms of government. To the extent that social and economic conditions may lead to crime, the government ought to commit itself to remove those conditions. The best option is for law enforcements officials and courts to have positive interaction with the community. Retributive justice holds the offender accountable to the state, and punishment emphasizes accountability. Restorative justice seeks to hold the offender accountable to the victim and community. It seeks to repair the damage and bring healing. Given the situation, either form of the administration of justice may be appropriate.

Biblical passages

I Samuel 8:1-5, 21-22

When Samuel became old, he made his sons judges over Israel. [2] The name of his
firstborn son was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judges in Beer-
sheba. [3] Yet his sons did not follow in his ways, but turned aside after gain; they took
bribes and perverted justice.

[4] Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, [5] and
said to him, "You are old and your sons do not follow in your ways; appoint for us, then,
a king to govern us, like other nations."

[21] When Samuel had heard all the words of the people, he repeated them in the ears of
the LORD. [22] The LORD said to Samuel, "Listen to their voice and set a king over them."
Samuel then said to the people of Israel, "Each of you return home."

II Samuel 7:1a, 2-9a, 11b-12, 13b-15, 17-22a, 27-28, 29c

Now when the king was settled in his house, [2] the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See
now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." [3] Nathan said to
the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you."

[4] But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: [5] Go and tell my servant
David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? [6] I have not
lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but
I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. [7] Wherever I have moved about
among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of
Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not
built me a house of cedar?" [8] Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus
says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be
prince over my people Israel; [9] and I have been with you wherever you went, and have
cut off all your enemies from before you; [11b] and I will give you rest from all your

enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. [12] When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. [13b] and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. [14] I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me. When he commits iniquity, I will punish him with a rod such as mortals use, with blows inflicted by human beings. [15] But I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. [17] In accordance with all these words and with all this vision, Nathan spoke to David.

[18] Then King David went in and sat before the LORD, and said, "Who am I, O Lord GOD, and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far? [19] And yet this was a small thing in your eyes, O Lord GOD; you have spoken also of your servant's house for a great while to come. May this be instruction for the people, O Lord GOD! [20] And what more can David say to you? For you know your servant, O Lord GOD! [21] Because of your promise, and according to your own heart, you have wrought all this greatness, so that your servant may know it. [22a] Therefore you are great, O LORD God; [27] For you, O LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, have made this revelation to your servant, saying, 'I will build you a house'; therefore your servant has found courage to pray this prayer to you. [28] And now, O Lord GOD, you are God, and your words are true, and you have promised this good thing to your servant; [29c] and with your blessing shall the house of your servant be blessed forever."

1 Kings 5:13-18 (NRSV)

[13] King Solomon conscripted forced labor out of all Israel; the levy numbered thirty thousand men. [14] He sent them to the Lebanon, ten thousand a month in shifts; they would be a month in the Lebanon and two months at home; Adoniram was in charge of the forced labor. [15] Solomon also had seventy thousand laborers and eighty thousand stonecutters in the hill country, [16] besides Solomon's three thousand three hundred supervisors who were over the work, having charge of the people who did the work. [17] At the king's command, they quarried out great, costly stones in order to lay the foundation of the house with dressed stones. [18] So Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders and the Gebalites did the stonecutting and prepared the timber and the stone to build the house.

Wisdom recognizes proper behavior in the court system.

A truthful witness saves lives,
but one who utters lies is a betrayer. (14:25 A)
A gift opens doors;
it gives access to the great. (18:16 A)
Many seek the favor of the generous,
and everyone is a friend to a giver of gifts. (19:6 A)

Wisdom recognizes proper behavior in the government.

The glory of a king is a multitude of people;
without people a prince is ruined. (14:28 A)
It is not fitting for a fool to live in luxury,

much less for a slave to rule over princes. (19:10 A)
When a land rebels
it has many rulers;
but with an intelligent ruler
there is lasting order. (28:2 B)
Without counsel, plans go wrong,
but with many advisers they succeed. (15:22 A)
A bad messenger brings trouble,
but a faithful envoy, healing. (13:17 B)
Do not put yourself forward in the king's presence
or stand in the place of the great;
for it is better to be told, "Come up here,"
than to be put lower in the presence of a noble. (25:6-7 A)
It is the glory of God to conceal things,
but the glory of kings is to search things out. (25:2 A)

1 Kings 21:1-20, 23-24 (NRSV)
21 Later the following events took place: Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard in Jezreel, beside the palace of King Ahab of Samaria. [2] And Ahab said to Naboth, "Give me your vineyard, so that I may have it for a vegetable garden, because it is near my house; I will give you a better vineyard for it; or, if it seems good to you, I will give you its value in money." [3] But Naboth said to Ahab, "The LORD forbid that I should give you my ancestral inheritance." [4] Ahab went home resentful and sullen because of what Naboth the Jezreelite had said to him; for he had said, "I will not give you my ancestral inheritance." He lay down on his bed, turned away his face, and would not eat.

[5] His wife Jezebel came to him and said, "Why are you so depressed that you will not eat?" [6] He said to her, "Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite and said to him, 'Give me your vineyard for money; or else, if you prefer, I will give you another vineyard for it'; but he answered, 'I will not give you my vineyard.' " [7] His wife Jezebel said to him, "Do you now govern Israel? Get up, eat some food, and be cheerful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."

[8] So she wrote letters in Ahab's name and sealed them with his seal; she sent the letters to the elders and the nobles who lived with Naboth in his city. [9] She wrote in the letters, "Proclaim a fast, and seat Naboth at the head of the assembly; [10] seat two scoundrels opposite him, and have them bring a charge against him, saying, 'You have cursed God and the king.' Then take him out, and stone him to death." [11] The men of his city, the elders and the nobles who lived in his city, did as Jezebel had sent word to them. Just as it was written in the letters that she had sent to them, [12] they proclaimed a fast and seated Naboth at the head of the assembly. [13] The two scoundrels came in and sat opposite him; and the scoundrels brought a charge against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, "Naboth cursed God and the king." So they took him outside the city, and stoned him to death. [14] Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, "Naboth has been stoned; he is dead."

[15] As soon as Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, Jezebel said to Ahab, "Go, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead." [16] As soon as Ahab heard that

Naboth was dead, Ahab set out to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.
[17] Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying: [18] Go down to meet King Ahab of Israel, who rules in Samaria; he is now in the vineyard of Naboth, where he has gone to take possession. [19] You shall say to him, "Thus says the LORD: Have you killed, and also taken possession?" You shall say to him, "Thus says the LORD: In the place where dogs licked up the blood of Naboth, dogs will also lick up your blood."
[20] Ahab said to Elijah, "Have you found me, O my enemy?" He answered, "I have found you. Because you have sold yourself to do what is evil in the sight of the LORD,
1 Kings 21:22-24 (NRSV)
[22] *and I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha son of Ahijah, because you have provoked me to anger and have caused Israel to sin.* [23] Also concerning Jezebel the LORD said, 'The dogs shall eat Jezebel within the bounds of Jezreel.' [24] Anyone belonging to Ahab who dies in the city the dogs shall eat; and anyone of his who dies in the open country the birds of the air shall eat."

2 Kings 13:22-25 (NRSV)
[22] Now King Hazael of Aram oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz. [23] But the LORD was gracious to them and had compassion on them; he turned toward them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them; nor has he banished them from his presence until now.

Amos 1:3-5 seems to refer to this time.

[3] Thus says the LORD:
For three transgressions of Damascus,
and for four, I will not revoke the punishment;
because they have threshed Gilead
with threshing sledges of iron.
[4] So I will send a fire on the house of Hazael,
and it shall devour the strongholds of Ben-hadad.
[5] I will break the gate bars of Damascus,
and cut off the inhabitants from the Valley of Aven,
and the one who holds the scepter from Beth-eden;
and the people of Aram shall go into exile to Kir, says the LORD.

In wisdom literature, the Lord cares about the way people run government affairs.

The way of the guilty is crooked,
but the conduct of the pure is right. (21:8 C)
One who justifies the wicked and one who condemns the righteous
are both alike an abomination to the Lord. (17:15 C)
The evil do not understand justice,
but those who seek the Lord understand it completely. (28:5 C)
Many seek the favor of a ruler,
but it is from the Lord that one gets justice. (29:26 C)

Where there is no prophecy, the people cast off restraint,
but happy are those who keep the law. (29:18 C)
When one will not listen to the law,
even one's prayers are an abomination. (28:9 C)
Righteousness exalts a nation,
but sin is a reproach to any people. (14:34 C)
When the righteous triumph, there is great glory,
but when the wicked prevail, people go into hiding. (28:12 C)
When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice;
but when the wicked rule, the people groan. (29:2 C)
When the wicked prevail, people go into hiding;
but when they perish, the righteous increase. (28:28 C)
Inspired decisions are on the lips of a king;
his mouth does not sin in judgment. (16:10 C)
The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord;
he turns it wherever he will. (21:1 C)

Wisdom of Solomon 6:1-5
Listen therefore, O kings, and understand; learn, O judges of the ends of the earth. [2] Give ear, you that rule over multitudes, and boast of many nations. [3] For your dominion was given you from the Lord, and your sovereignty from the Most High; he will search out your works and inquire into your plans. [4] Because as servants of his kingdom you did not rule rightly, or keep the law, or walk according to the purpose of God, [5] he will come upon you terribly and swiftly, because severe judgment falls on those in high places.

Romans 13:1-7
Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists authority resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. 3 For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Do you wish to have no fear of the authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive its approval; 4 for it is God's servant for your good. But if you do what is wrong, you should be afraid, for the authority does not bear the sword in vain! It is the servant of God to execute wrath on the wrongdoer. 5 Therefore one must be subject, not only because of wrath but also because of conscience. 6 For the same reason you also pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, busy with this very thing. 7 Pay to all what is due them-- taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, honor to whom honor is due.

1 Peter 2:13-15
For the Lord's sake accept the authority of every human institution, whether of the emperor as supreme, 14 or of governors, as sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to praise those who do right. 15 For it is God's will that by doing right you should silence the ignorance of the foolish.

1 Timothy 2:1-2

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, 2 for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity.

The Moral Basis of Government in Historical Perspective

It may seem strange to think of government as having a moral basis. Such a beginning supposes that government arises out of moral reflection and moral judgment. The truth of this supposition is one that history can show us. However, the questions of how ought human beings organize themselves for the common good is a moral question.

The moral basis of government is nothing other than the recognition by the government that every person as inherent dignity as a human being. Therefore, they have inalienable rights as individuals who are members of the human family. The recognition of such rights is the basis human beings of working toward a world in which we will find liberty, justice, and peace. When governments disregard such rights, the result is barbarous acts against citizens and non-citizens. Individuals, having dignity and rights, also have reason and conscience that they can use toward building a spirit of being part of the same human family. Race, color, gender, language, religion, political opinion, ethnic origin, property, or social status, ought not to determine the ways in which a government distributes these rights. What are these rights? Individuals have the right to own property. They have a right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion. This includes the right to change religion or belief systems. This also includes the right to express freely religious teaching, practice, worship, and observance. Individuals have the right to freedom of opinion, including a right to receive and impart information and ideas through all the forms of media. They have the right to associate peacefully and freely. If all of these principles are in place, individuals have the right to participate freely in government through chosen representatives. In this way, the moral basis of government becomes the

will of the people, as expressed in periodic and genuine elections in which all citizens shall participate through a secret ballot.

The previous paragraph is my reflection upon the Universal Declaration of Human Rights developed by the UN in 1948, principles continued in the UN International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights. Throughout these documents, one sees evidence of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and other amendments to the constitution. Americans need to hear this point clearly. The moral basis of government contained in international documents is the collection of documents that formed the basis of government in America. Those who wrote these documents were James Madison and Thomas Jefferson. Given the continuing influence in shaping the moral basis of government of the founders of America, Americans would do well to respect them and learn from them. One of the courageous things the people of the world could still learn from them is that, when a government does not have a moral foundation, the people have the right to overthrow that government and establish a new one that does have the moral right to be part of the family nations that govern from a moral base.

The purpose of government in liberal democracy is to remove hindrances to individuals who freely develop their plan for the best human life they can lead. Another way to say this is that legitimate rulers govern for the common good, and not only for their own advantage. When political leaders model the best human life, when political leaders provide for freedom, when political leaders persuade in rational discourse, they have done all that they should do in a liberal democracy to move people toward the best human life.

From an historical perspective, religion played the role of legitimizing political authority. Since the Enlightenment, political ideologies have replaced religion as the legitimizing authority of a political order. Consequently, the political ideology I am dealing with is that of liberal democracy.

Legitimacy is a term in which we discuss the authority of the state and its right to the allegiance of citizens. Some societies enjoy an easier, more spontaneous cohesion that relies less on the use of force than others do. One can think that those societies that are more spontaneously cohesive enjoy a greater sense of legitimacy among their members. When a political world provides people freedom and resides in the will of the people, provides order and law, it increases its legitimacy. Such a political world becomes a public good, and not simply an instrument for individuals to accomplish their ends.

Human beings are such social creatures that at every stage of human history they create systems of social organization. Various social worlds that we have constructed have inflicted great evil upon the world. Understandably, the people often look for such an authority, especially when the times seem critical or chaotic. For example, in the Old Testament, the breakdown of the tribal federation because of its inability to deal with new enemies led the people to demand a king. This demand would lead to the forced labor imposed by King Solomon. It also leads to the intrigues surrounding who was in authority in Jerusalem or Samaria. The demand by the people for a strong person in official authority eventually leads to an abuse of authority. A modern example, of course, is the election of Hitler to power in Germany. In a time of chaos and confusion, he brought a plurality of Germans to his side of the argument, and then abused the authority granted him. Rarely are “the people” simply victims of abusive authority. At the same

time, among the tragedies of a human life is that some tyrants and criminals desire the suffering and death of our neighbors and us. Tyrants suspect the motive of good people and therefore oppress them.

One way to approach the analysis of social systems is through the eyes of oppressor and oppressed. Such systems inevitably lead to the destruction of the worth and dignity of individuals, and thus to the dehumanization of everyone, including the oppressor. Most of human history consists of a small few oppressing the vast majority of people, keeping them at subsistence levels in order to destroy hope, dreams, worth, and dignity. The tribal system had the strong bonds of the clan to hold it together. The early portions of the Bible arose in such a culture. The dramatic call of Abraham to leave his clan is a testimony to the strength of the call of Yahweh. The sadness of the stories of Abraham and Lot, and even Jacob and Esau, show that separation among people of the same clan could happen, but it was a sad day when it occurred. Military or aggressive systems have existed throughout history. They have focused upon expansion of their territory and the enslavement of others. The feudal system provided strong bonds of church and honor between its participants. It also provided a rigid system of hierarchy that kept everyone in their place. The rise of nation states, and with them European colonialism, was a way to utilize new technology, find new markets, and exploit new resources. In the 20th century, Nazism was a particularly brutal form of military government, both imposing itself upon its German population and upon its neighbors. The primary bond within society it created was one of fear. Communism killed more people in its history than other ideology in history, also creating social bonds through fear. Theocracy, rule by the dominant religious order of a country, is the dominant form

of government within Muslim countries. The imposition of Sharia Law imposes Muslim practices upon everyone, turning non-Muslim citizens into second-class citizens. Further, conversion from Islam is punishable by death. One can accurately describe each of these systems of government in terms of oppressed and oppressor. Such civilizations experience internal contradictions because of the anger that arises from the failure of the civilization to recognize individual worth and dignity. It leads to the master and slave relationship that is so typical of most societies. Masters find fulfillment of their drive toward self-esteem by denying that right to others in society. Slaves struggle for recognition of their basic human dignity, experiencing denial at every turn.

The works of Noam Chomsky suggest that America is still an oppressed and oppressor society. Capitalists have so dominated information systems that voters cannot meaningful participate in the electoral process. Voters do have the information they need to vote their true economic interests. If they did, they would continue to support democratic institutions and vote for some form of democratic socialism. I find such a read of the American political system incredibly arrogant, for only a superior intellect like Chomsky, and those with the wisdom to accept his analysis, can be the enlightened few who notice the system of oppression. Otherwise, consumers continue to consume, and employees continue to work, without knowledge of how oppressed they are. They may have more television sets than they do people in the home, access to the Internet, several automobiles, and comfortable homes, but someone evil, probably white and privileged, oppresses them. My point is that the analysis of Chomsky ultimately blinds him to the real oppression that exists in the world by making him focus upon the

improvable imperfections of the liberal democratic and capitalist system we find in the United States.

Yet, we know that politics, economics, and the military are not absolute evils or tools of the oppressor to bring oppression. Some forms of government have had a benevolent effect upon the population, given the nature of the times in which they existed. This suggests the possibility that the political world can experience a shift in perspective from oppression to that of promoting the general welfare of the people.

Democracies experience shame when they do not live up to their ideals. They have a proper sense of pride when they experience a proper proportion of their worth in the presence of others. The obvious economic orientation of liberal democracies contains an equally important and subtle influence of the ethical and religious value of the dignity and worth of individuals. We find this value reflected in a variety of ways. Liberal democracies are not self-sufficient. The community life on which they depend must ultimately come from a source different from liberalism itself. One assumes the need for sympathetic understanding of others, including those with whom one disagrees. It reduces inappropriate nationalism while restoring national pride. It resists disrespecting the people of other countries by conquering them through military force. It hopes for the spread of liberal democracies through the will of the people. It encourages the art of associating in small communities. Work becomes a means of expressing one's worth and dignity rather than simple drudgery.

Contrary to the opinion of Noam Chomskey, democratic societies represent a protest against oppressed and oppressor systems. Liberal democracy has destroyed the master and slave relationship that has existed in the past and exists today in most of the

civilizations of the world. Therefore, this civilization places a high demand upon masses of individuals (in other societies, the slaves) to find their unique place within culture. As Nietzsche appropriately observed, it elevates the weak by making them participants in the formation of a country. He detested the idea. However, in this elevation we find the greatest strength of democratic societies. Every individual has rights separate from the society, the economy, and the political structure, within which he or she is born. Free societies invite even the weakest to participate in the formation of families, in the formation of the social bonds that hold society together, in the economic plan of society by becoming a consumer, producer, and worker, and in the political system by voting and holding office. This system of government is risky business. The hierarchical nature of most animal life and mammal life suggests that democracy trends against nature. Yet, the social bond created through individual participation of citizens at every level of society strengthens the bonds of democratic society. The bonds become internal, especially through the development of respect for the worth and dignity of fellow citizens. Government will always have tendency toward the abuse of power, and thus form unjust domestic and foreign policy. The best check on such injustice is the people. Even the much-maligned tendency of the people to divide into many special interests groups may well cripple the ability of the government to enact extremely unjust laws.

The social system generated by a free society is one of partnership. The liberty liberal democracy encourages, particularly in the pursuit of individual happiness, encourages respect for the worth and dignity of individuals. Such respect includes honoring their property, their right to care for that property, the expression of the worth and dignity they have as individuals, the freedom they have to form families, to become

involved in civil society, to pursue their economic interests, and to participate in the political process. Where a free society fails in its respect for individuals, peaceful reform is at least possible through participation in the political process. In America, the obvious failures include treatment of the Native American, the institution of slavery, and denial to women of the right to vote. The Civil War represented a major failure of liberal democracy to institute non-violent change toward an increasingly just social order. The modern social world of liberal democracy is a partnership that acknowledges peaceful and nonviolent competition between individuals and groups, and the peaceful resolution of disputes through rational discourse, elections and through the courts.

Individuals are self-interested. The acknowledgement that individuals spend most of their time caring for themselves is important. This is the only life any of us will lead. We properly spend time and energy caring for how to live this life. Yet, the free engagement of citizens with each other also brings them outside of themselves, and brings transformation of individuals as they do so. The engagement with others is an ethical engagement by its nature, and brings some reflection upon how one ought to behave toward other citizens. This reality increases the internal bonds of society. This social world is, in principle, a nonviolent engagement with others, unless we misuse the term "violence" to refer to any form of competition between human beings. Citizens cooperate and compete, having the freedom to pursue their vision of the best human life. The freedom of engagements in this social world makes for an amazing lack of oppressor and oppressed relationships. Granted, husband and wife, employer and employee, and racial relationships, have been such relationships. Yet, the liberty of citizens provides the

possibility for peaceful reform where government has endorsed such oppressive relationships and participated in them.

My suggestion is that modern democratic societies represent the redemption of the social world from the dominant form of government in history, that of oppressed and oppressor, master and slave, and invites many other forms of relationships. We might think of relationships like cooperation and competition, producer of products and consumer of products, employer and employee, teacher and student, serving a community, freely associating around specific tasks, political engagement, and so on. For such reasons, one can hope that the world one day will have every government understand that its primary duties are "to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity." Such governments may find other ways of organizing themselves economically other than free enterprise that also accomplish these seven goals of government. However, the world will be increasingly peaceful and just if every government agrees with the United States that these are the proper goals of government.

Is there a parental role for government?

I raise at this point the question of whether the federal government has a parental role toward the citizens of a free society. Everyone agrees that the government is the body within the nation that establishes a system of laws, courts, and police. In a sense, the government is the enforcer of the laws and rules of the "game," much as an umpire must interpret and apply the rules of the game of baseball. An umpire has done the job if everyone recognizes that the umpire has determined the outcome of the game. However,

many people look upon the federal government as having a parental role. In this view, the government has the responsibility to care for its citizens from birth to death, from the cradle to the grave. America has never accepted such a role for government in total. It has undoubtedly moved in that direction since the New Deal, and especially since the "War on Poverty" as put forward by Lyndon Johnson. I think the question has now become not so much whether the federal government has this role, but how much of a parental role it has.

Everyone agrees that the federal government has the role of intervening when one citizen oppresses another citizen, as Adam Smith has said. Such a role is largely a police action. Such a law prohibits destructive behavior between citizens. The government asserts its will against a citizen only when the citizen insists upon doing harm to another citizen. Regardless of political persuasion, people agree on this. The place of difference is whether the government has the right to impose its will upon citizens for their good. John Stuart Mill has said in his little book, *On Liberty*, that the individual has sovereignty over his or her mind and body. Although I have sympathy with this view, I prefer the observation of Hegel in his *Philosophy of Right.* He suggested that modern societies have destroyed the extended family, a unit that provided health care, education, and a retirement system. I tend to think that the federal government must concern itself with such matters. The question is how the government ought to concern itself with them. Ought the government to have one program that applies to all citizens? Alternatively, ought the government to intervene in social and economic relationships in a way that allows for the greatest possible diversity of expression?

I am not a policy wonk. I would suggest, however, that Milton Friedman and the Heritage Foundation have come up with some interesting proposals that value individual accountability while at the same time affirming to some degree the parental role of government. Parental choice in education, with vouchers that a parent could use for any public or private school, is an option for improving education. The negative income tax would remove the federal bureaucracy involved in welfare replace it with monthly payments to the affected families. The retirement system could reasonably move toward private retirement accounts. As the reader can see, the point is to move away from single pay, government operated systems, and move toward placing important decisions in the hands of those most affected – the citizens.

Christianity: giving shape to liberal democracy

Liberal democracy has more roots in the Christian tradition that it cares to admit. Christianity needed enlightenment and scientific thinking to teach it the value of tolerance and the separation of church from state. Yet, some of the basic values needed for democracy to arise in Europe, it received from Christianity.

First, the universalizing tendency of secular society has its origin in Christianity. Modernity has the vision that as long as science, technology, and freedom spread to every nation, peace and justice will also spread. Although this vision has a naïveté to it, it also recognizes that important cultural objectives and ideas do not belong to one nation, ethnic group, or race.

I would suggest that the historical and intellectual source for this universal trend is the church. The message of the church embodied itself in a universal appeal in that it went against ethnic divisions to create a community that transcended such distinctions.

The church embodied its universality in its fellowship, baptism, and the Eucharist. No matter what gender, economic class, or race, one still submitted to baptism and received bread and cup, even when fellowship in the midst of diversity was so hard to attain. The Christian vision is the source of universalizing hope that all people of the world will live under governments that respect their rights, worth, and dignity. Such principles of democracy as universality, peace, justice, freedom, equality, and fraternity, needs to become the foundation of every nation, and through such principles, human life on earth will become increasingly peaceful and just. This universal vision brings beyond caring for citizens of a particular nation to caring for all persons. This vision includes peace and justice embedded in institutions of all nations. Such a vision proposes that civilization has a role in assisting individuals in actualizing their fullest and best *human* life in association with others.

Among the challenges for modern societies is to bring pre-modern societies into the modern world. We need to consider seriously the kind of social world nations of the world create. In an era when terrorists willingly kill themselves, teach children to kill themselves, use civilians as human shields, and kill civilians in the marketplace, the social, political, and economic world created by human beings matters to us all. In our time, we need to acknowledge that ideas like that of freedom, equality, and fraternity have an important contribution to make to every social world. Without being exhaustive, this includes respecting rights of ethnic minorities, religious minorities, protecting and nurturing children and youth, respecting senior citizens, moving toward equal rights for women in all cultures, and respecting persons with various disabilities. We are social creatures. We will either create a social world, and ultimately a global culture, that

enhances human worth and dignity, or destroys it. Given the global nature of human life today, those living in modern societies need to consider seriously the form of social world that people create in any place. In other words, a social world that inflicts suffering and oppression upon its own citizens is more likely to spread this sickness to other lands. Justice and peace are ideals that need actualization in the minds and hearts of individuals and in institutional life. Technology has brought increased connection of the diversity of individuals and cultures on a global scale. Individual governments can have great diversity. However, they must have constitutions that respect the rights of their citizens for liberty. The respect for the rights of their citizens will naturally lead to respect for the citizens of other countries. The web of relationships that forms international relationships today requires such care for how the leaders of countries treat their citizens. Modern technology increases the sense of fraternity with all human beings. For those who have the privilege of living in a country that respects their freedom, a natural desire is for every human being to enjoy such a social world.

Second, modernity is the first human culture that respects the worth and dignity of the individual to a significant degree. I want to be quite direct at this point. The ability of a social system to make the individual the goal and standard of this success is the criterion of its embodiment of any degree of truth it contains. This recognition of the importance of the individual by political and economic powers is the embodiment in social institution of the worth and dignity of individuals. Politically, this recognition occurs through democratic processes and through the possibility of running for political office. Economically, this recognition occurs in the freedom to begin businesses, to work for whomever one can enter into contractual relationship, and to purchase products one

desires. Every individual becomes part of the political and economic plan of the nation. Further, this regard for the individual expands into the arena of ideas. Individuals have the right to persuade others politically, of course, but this right extends into areas of values and religion as well.

Modernity did not create this principle out of thin air. The most likely source for this principle is the Christian tradition. However, we need to be clear that Christianity never found a way to embody this principle in social institutions. It lost the opportunity to do so at the era of Constantine, when the focus of energy became the unity of the church in dogma, fellowship with the bishop of Rome, and the parallel between God as king and the emperor as ruler of the Empire. Given the fragmentation of the Empire, the focus of the church upon that which brought unity is quite understandable. However, the apostolic witness contains an important valuation of the individual as both created in the image of God and a sinner. Jesus and Paul emphasized the value of the individual in relationship to God. They also emphasized the universal love of God for humanity, transcending national and ethnic boundaries. The Apostle Paul and Augustine through his the account of his life in his confessions provides the intellectual foundation for the value that modernity place upon the dignity and worth of individuals. In terms of the immediate context for modernity, Quakers, free churches and Baptist sects called for a separation of church and state in order to ensure that the state did not impose one form of religion throughout the territory. They insisted on freedom of individuals to form their judgment in matters related to faith. In doing so, they rightly believed they restored the apostolic at this point. The church respects the rights of all individuals and of other social institutions

as independently existing entities. Christianity and the genuine concerns of humanism do not oppose each other.

Third, freedom and equality are important to modernity. People deserve the opportunity to live the best *human* life they can lead. This suggests rejection of any human authority as ultimate. The rejection of enforced unity means that pluralism and tolerance become valued principles of modernity. What unifies culture is regard for the individual to the point of differing over fundamental beliefs and values while at the same to refusing the option of killing them to end the dispute. The struggle of the modern social world is that the free individuals in a secular society are indeed free to pursue their best interest, but for that reason are not yet free in truth. Freedom becomes an excuse for the self-destructive behavior for which we human beings are all too well acquainted.

Liberty involves creating a shared community in which cooperation and competition can take place. Equality requires a third party, such as a central government, that imposes economic equality by taking from one group of society and giving to others. If individuals did this, we would call it stealing. The result is that the work of our hands and minds become the property of others. What we do with our freedom is the result of our initiative in the present as we look forward to our sense of destiny for the future. We speak of human rights in the plural; we speak of human dignity in the singular. Human dignity is one and indivisible; it is the quality of being human. We are responsible to our future self; we are responsible for the future of humanity. Human life is shared life, communicated and communicating life, communion and communication.

Liberal democracy received this value for human society from Christianity. The apostolic sources suggested that humanity is both a creature made in the image of God

and a sinner before God and to whom God offers grace equally to all. In Christ, female and male, slave and free, and so on, do not exist as hierarchical relationships. Again, this apostolic vision of equality before God does not translate into social relationships. In the beginning, the social environment was so hostile that it could not offer this gift to the Roman Empire. Christianity worked with the philosophy of Stoicism in emphasizing freedom and equality of individuals. Its difference with Stoicism was that freedom and equality were future possibilities rather than formed by nature. The insight of Christianity is that freedom and equality are ends and outcomes of certain individual and cultural processes, and thus involve human responsibility for openness to experiencing them, rather than something possessed at birth. With the rise of the church and empire, hierarchy and authority become important for the progress of unity that Europe needed in its social environment. The church used the analogy of the organism having a hierarchy of parts that culminate in the head to suggest that the church had an earthly head, the bishop of Rome, and a secular head, the emperor. This already began breaking down as the Roman Empire split apart and the bishop of Rome had to deal with multiple of kings. The contribution of Christianity to modernity at this point arose from the Reformation and the emphasis of Luther on the freedom of the Christian and from the free church and Baptist movements. The latter had interest in having social setting that allowed them to practice their private and pietistic faith without hindrance from the Catholic and Lutheran political leaders. The Reformation continued to hold out the hope for a Christian society. The free churches and Baptist sects had given up on that possibility. As a result, they wanted the state to leave them alone to practice their faith. In addition, the liberal

Christianity of Schliermacher and Ritschl also helped bring denominations of the Reformation into modern civilization.

The modern discourse on morality focuses on freedom and autonomy. Here is a place where some strands of modernity simply stress the fact of freedom and tolerance, with little concern as to what people actually do with that freedom. Freedom is wonderful. I think it rather silly to lament the paralysis of choice in modernity, whether in consumer products, ideas, morality, or religion. Such choice places renewed responsibility upon individuals for their happiness. If we respect the worth and dignity of individuals, those in the church need to celebrate choice, rather than look longingly toward some past dominance of the church that probably never existed in reality.

Modernity has provided religion with freedom to worship as communities choose. This gives the impression that religion is another commodity of choice, rather than a genuine quest for what is true. Modernity actually encourages fideism, where everyone simply makes a choice in matters of religion without reflecting rationally upon that choice. With the coming of the scientific age, Immanuel Kant offered a modern and rational version of religion. Although we can read it today with historical interest, the end result is that if religion is what Kant says, why bother? Choosing in the area of the meaning structure of our lives gives the impression that meaning is whatever I as an individual says it is. It gives the impression of an arbitrary choice, rather than a devout quest for the best human life I can lead. The plurality that modernity places before us is a gift. Yet, it leaves with the impressions such important decisions about the meaning, purpose, and direction of human life are not really so important. As long as one receives the education necessary, gets along with people to some degree, gets a job, votes, and

raises a family, one has done all that is important for modern civilization. Modernity suggests that, as long as morality does not infringe upon the choice of someone else, it does not matter what moral structure we choose for our lives. Morality itself is nothing but a personal desire for a certain kind of life. The problem with this view is that for some of us, morality involves genuine concern for the course of life of the neighbor. Although I am quite hesitant to use the government to enforce moral conditions I would like to see, I also hesitate to deny its potential in some areas. Thus, elected governments enforced slavery and segregation, both practices involving the oppression of one group of citizens by another group of citizens. As Adam Smith makes clear, one of the legitimate functions of government is to interfere when such oppression occurs. The responsibility of the nation toward those most separated from the benefits of modernity is one all citizens should (moral word) recognize.

For some strands of modernity, science is the primary source for whatever truth it thinks it can discover. Intellectual formation increasingly focuses on math and natural sciences. Modernity has gained greater control over time through its knowledge of history and its ability to manage and plan the future. Traditional communities focused on family, clan, tribe, and village, will steadily pass away. Industrial society gives way to information society. Traditional norms and values do not appear to meet the needs of modern society. At the same time, other strands of modernity recognize that truth is far more nuanced than that. One cannot give evidence for a religion in the way one does a scientific theory. One can suggest, however, that a well-lived human life is more like a well-written novel or well-regarded painting. The artist has put everything together in a way that becomes pleasing to the artist at the level of intuition. One senses that a certain

twist of plot, a certain shading of one area of a painting, will make the difference. The meaning structure of human life is more like an aesthetic experience than it is a scientific theory. For the Christian, my analogy breaks down at this point. It is not enough for me to derive pleasure from what I have done with my life. It is far more important for me to recognize my accountability to the apostolic witness of the church, the tradition of the church, and the community to which I now relate. For the Christian, the painting or novel tells me something about the world, humanity, and the future toward which God moves us. Further, I offer what I have done with the brief time I have to God, to whom I am ultimately accountable. I have a responsibility of laying before others this vision.

Fourth, this also means that a sense of life together, that of creative love for each other, that of fraternity, is an important dimension of democracy. With the freedom individuals have also comes responsibility for each other. It may be little more than the recognition that one day, you will need help, so you help others. More importantly, every human being confronts ethical questions when faced with the other. Will we fight, or have mutual regard for the life of the other. Will we speak the truth and live truthfully with each other. Will we be faithful to the marriage covenant? Will we deal generously and compassionately with others, and especially the poor? We cannot avoid ethical questions when faced with the other. If the other is completely alien to me, I may justify horrendous actions. If the other is in some sense part of the same human family, I owe the other regard and respect.

This sense of fraternity among all human beings derives most reasonably from the Christian view of one God as the source of all life as the Father of all. Such creative love will respect diversity and unite in community. Christianity no longer viewed God simply

in what is like it; it viewed increasing knowledge of God through what is different. We respect and recognize other people and those who are strange to us when we stop trying to make them like ourselves. We open ourselves to their particular character, thereby opening up the possibility of transforming ourselves with them into a new community of people who are different from each other. We recognize God in the stranger, the genuine victim, and the suffering of life. God is the God of the whole of life, of every life, and of the shared life of us all.

From a Christian perspective, the political order of society has a relationship to the reign of God by the task of achieving an order of justice and peace in social life. The concept of the future rule of God recognizes that God is active in the world to accomplish the purpose of God for individuals and for humanity, even where people do not specifically acknowledge God as God. Therefore, although the political order cannot bring in the reign of God, it has the responsibility of moving closer to the justice and peace toward which the reign of God aims. No existing political order does full justice to this social task.

I suggest today that an important source of ethical reflection for Christians today is that the future rule of God has a political dimension, for that future proclaims the future of humanity in this world. The social, cultural, political, and economic cultural life of a people is a provisional sign of the reign of God. Pluralism within a society is a sign of its relativity in light of the future that God intends. In other words, no human being or institution can impose that future. The respect we have for each other as individuals and as groups shows humility in regard to oneself and one's ideas.

My intent has been to show such principle ideas as these as a contribution of varying forces within Christianity to the formation of modernity.

Failures of the churches

The history of the churches contains a record of its failures. One could say the same of various political ideologies as well. I think of Communism, the slaughter by Stalin of millions of his people, the bondage of people in Easter Europe, China, and North Korea, the slaughters under Pol Pot, and the Arab version of Communism in the Bathist Party of Hussein in Iraq and its rule in Syria. I think of the Nazis. I think of the wars that have their origin in Islam. Muslims have fought each other, as well as exporting their religion through military conquest. Yet, none of this record of sins excuses the churches from the terrible things that they have done in the name of Christ.

Christians failed to improve the lives of the masses as it valued ascetic spirituality, otherworld hopes, and friendship with the powerful. Christians failed to respect their Jewish neighbors, and instead labeled them as God-killers. Christians failed to deal with the growth of Islam in the East and instead resorted to crusades. The church obedient to Rome failed to deal with growing challenges to the authority of tradition to shape contemporary life, a challenge clarified by its treatment of Galileo and Martin Luther. Further, the religious wars of the 1600's remain a disgraceful part of European church history that led to the separation of church from state in the 1700's. One form of Christianity dominated Latin American countries for centuries, and yet masses of people remained on the margins while the church dined with the wealthy and powerful. Human beings have done horrible things in the name of Christ. Of course, human beings have also done horrible things in the name of liberty, peace, Mohammed, the workers of the

world, and any number of others causes. What this means for contemporary relationships with other religions, and in particular the Muslim faith, is that a religion untouched by a modern form of life will trend toward its totalitarian and intolerant foundation. Religion forgets the first rule of religion: Do no harm. Modern Christians need to understand that the generosity with which they approach other religions is not a courtesy that other religions will extend to them, unless the participants in inter-religious dialogue share the perspective of modern life. The religions of the world need to experience the transformation that modern civilization brings to them.

Failures of liberal democracy

The concept of human rights derives from the Greek Stoics, from the Enlightenment, the Magna Carta of 1215, the English Bill of Rights of 1689, the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 1789, and the American Constitution of 1787 and the Bill of Rights of 1791. These rights have a firm foundation in the Western philosophical and political tradition. At their best, Liberal Democracies uphold these rights. Liberal democratic institutions are the best hope for the world to embed these rights in every nation. Every nations needs to have a government policy and norm that moves toward respecting these rights of their citizens.

One of the many gifts of this philosophical and political tradition is the capacity for self-criticism. A culture cannot improve itself in the application of its ideals if it does have this capacity. Many cultures lack this capacity. To many Turks, the genocide committed by the Ottoman Empire against Christian Armenians never occurred. In Japanese textbooks, the Bataan Death March, the Rape of Nanking, and the cause of World War II evaporate from the record. Inhabitants of the late Soviet Union believed

that their country invented the television, but the millions of people it killed in the name of Soviet Communism was not part of their historical record. In my own experience of engaging in Muslim and Christian dialogue, I have found Muslims quite ready to point to the Crusades, and quite unwilling to deal with the armed expansion of Islam as far as Spain in the 700's.

Intellectuals who live in liberal democracies need to look honestly at what goes on in other countries.

Female genital mutilation

Apostasy executions

Ethnically based land expropriation

Trial by ordeal

Slavery

Intellectuals who want to rid the world of oppression and bring in the rule of law have no greater ally in the world than the United States.

Liberal democracy in general and America in particular often finds that the capacity for self-criticism exaggerates the sins and suppresses the virtues. The political agenda that drives this exaggerated self-criticism is the need to tarnish American history in the eyes of the citizens. To do so opens the possibility of re-making America in light of an ideology other than that of liberty.

The history of the advance of modernity has always had its shadow side. Noam Chomsky refers to it as the European conquest of the world. Europeans gained this global domination by military force, rather than a moral, spiritual, social, or natural force. Sin is not just a personal experience; it shows itself in every aspect of the social world. In this

section, I will mention some of the more obvious areas of failure. I will also mention some areas in which I think the Left has mistaken as failures. As I do so, however, the context is important. As part of the liberal democratic tradition, and as part of the American experience, one must make a fundamental decision. Do the sins of the past mean that the West must commit suicide? Alternatively, do the sins of the past call for present repentance and commitment to a future that practices regard for human rights? We need to remember that, on an individual basis, we sin daily. Yet we get up in the morning and continue with our lives, hopefully with purer motives, with less trust in ourselves, and more trust in God.

1492 laid the foundation for the modern, secular, free, pluralistic, democratic culture that Europe has shaped. 1492 was the birth of modern times. The Ottoman Empire, the Indian empire of the Moguls, and China, were far more impressive. In 1492, Europe moved from the periphery of world history to the center. Hegel (Introduction: Reason in History) noted that America is the land of the future where importance for the history of the whole world will be manifested. That year represents the beginning of the influence of European ideas, not only in the Americas, but also throughout the world. The islands, mountains, and rivers had names long before Europeans arrived. Europeans appropriated the new lands for themselves. Christianity came along with conquest, sometimes in service to the state, but often modifying imperial claims in the name of Christ.

While the Reformation began in Germany in 1517, Cortez sailed for Mexico. When Luther stood before the Diet of Worms in 1521 to proclaim that he stood on the Bible alone, Cortez conquered the Aztecs. Hobbes created his Leviathan, a vision of the

modern political state as created by people for the purpose of power and destructive in nature. He surrendered the right of individuals to self-determination to Leviathan. When Lessing and Kant published their Enlightenment treatises, slave traders bought Africans and brought them to America.

Slavery and feudalism were common in Europe up to about 600 years ago. In 1860 in South Carolina, more than half of the population was in slavery. Government sponsored segregation and racism continued for 100 years. The struggle for women's right to vote did not end until WWI.

The industrial build up brought with it economic dislocation, class structures, ecological upheaval. Yet, the fact of African slavery and the use of the vast mineral resources in early American history obscure the value of genuine creativity, freedom, and initiative that produced American wealth. In fact, slavery in the South led to the depletion of wealth in comparison with the North.

Among the many dark moments of the history of liberal democracy was rise of imperialism. It could not have occurred without the enthusiastic support of the middle classes in Europe and America between 1884 and 1914. Imperialism grew with the political awakening of the middle classes. The French used colonies for national defense. The British allowed the conquered to keep most of their culture and religion. The cause of this imperialism was the over-production of capital and superfluous money. It arose as business leaders shifted their attention from production to speculation. Money went to foreign lands.

An alliance between capital and the masses was necessary to carry off imperialism. Race motivated this imperialism, and not the class warfare that Marx

predicted. In fact, racism could have doomed liberal democracy as well as human civilization. Liberal democracy as a form of humanitarian civilization ends when Russians become Slavs, when the English become white people, and when Germans become Aryans. From the perspective of political life, race thinking is the end of humanity, the decay of a people, and the unnatural death of humanity.

Government bureaucracy implemented imperialism. Rudyard Kipling builds legends around it. The evolutionary thought of Herbert Spencer provided a twisted philosophical rationale for it. Nazism was a pan-German movement. Bolshevism was a pan-Slavic movement. Both were imperialistic, with tribal theories of being a chosen race. Both movements had prejudice against Judaism.

Anti-Jewish thought arose in Europe in the context of the rise of capitalism, which brought the decline in Jewish influence in government power and wealth. Jewish leadership naively thought that they could make friends with power, and did not need to make friends with the middle classes, whose political awareness began to rise. The Rothchild family exerted influence during the period of imperialism, but also steadily declined. The Jewish family preserved Jewish traditions. The anti-Jewish feeling of aristocratic families in Europe grew as the Jewish alliance with government increased. The banking scandals from 1880 to 1900 also turned the lower classes against Judaism. Several anti-Jewish political parties developed in Europe.

Many people still consider it an accident that Nazi ideology centered around anti-Judaism and that Nazi policy, consistently and uncompromisingly, aimed at the persecution and finally the extermination of the Jews. The horror of the final catastrophe, the homelessness and uprootedness of the survivors, made the Jewish question prominent

in our everyday political life. What the Nazis themselves claimed to be their discovery and their chief interest public opinion regarded as a pretext for winning the masses or an interesting device of demagogy.

America has not actualized its hopes and dreams for its own citizens or for the world. Many people look at America and develop a moral problem with the nation. The United States is a deeply flawed nation.

The 1800's saw significant changes in the United States. In the 1700's, people did not equate citizenship with the right to vote. That identification began in the 1800's. Various reform movements, not the least of which was the movement to remove slavery from North America, began in this century. The period was a time of secular and religious perfectionist movements. A paradox of this period was the enhancing of the power of the executive branch of government while decreasing that of the legislative branch. The most important element was the emergence of political parties. People called upon the state to play a much more activist role in society. This was clear in the election of Andrew Jackson as president and of his party in the legislature. This was a way to circumvent the careful balance of powers envisioned earlier. Private agencies were encouraged to achieve public or socially approved purposes. Legislation was sought which was believed to accomplish the objective of reform. Government was taking on more responsibility for the progressive improvement of the condition of the governed. Leaders embodied this vision in the notion of progress. This progress meant the liberation of the individual. This belief was strong enough that it developed into the notion of a "law of progress" which guided people in spite of themselves. They viewed progress in terms of material comforts and a higher standard of living, the result of

growing expectations of technology. This led to voluntary organizations forming for the purpose of the reform of specific institutions of society.

Yet, war became an important way in which the nation dealt with its need to make progress.

In the War of 1812, 1812-1815, the number of serving from the armed services was 286,730. There were 2260 total deaths and 4505 wounded. It cost $120,000.

The United States broke the word it had pledged in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. In the Mexican-American War, 1846-1848, the number serving from the armed services was 78,718. There were 1733 battle deaths, 11,550 other deaths, and 4152 wounded. It cost $120,000.

In the Civil War, 1861-1865, there were 2.2 million Union and 1.5 million Confederate soldiers. There were 140,414 Union battle deaths and 74,524 Confederate battle deaths, making 214,938 battle deaths. There were 224,097 other Union deaths and 59,297 other Confederate deaths, making 283,394 deaths. This brings the total American dead to 498,332. Dollar figures are incomplete, but it cost $6,790,000 for the Union and at least $5,000,000 for the Confederacy.

The United States expanded its boundaries by defeating the tribes that blocked its way. Indian wars in the 1800's justly raise concerns about the values of liberal democracy. However, the context is important. Native American tribes consistently backed the wrong side in wars. They did so because they wanted the European settlers along the coast to go back to Europe. Yet, they fought against Americans in the French and Indian war, they fought with the British during the war for independence, and they worked with the French and against the Americans in the War of 1812. Such decisions

were understandable, but they also had consequences throughout the 1800's. The period boasts colorful figures like Kit Carson. Another of the colorful figures here was Jim Bowie (1796-1836). He was a frontiersman, soldier, and popular hero of the Texas revolution. He was killed at the Alamo. Either he or his brother invented the Bowie knife. Another was Davey Crockett (1786-1836), a hero of frontier America. He fought in the Creek War under Andrew Jackson. He was elected to the Tennessee legislature and the U. S. Congress. He joined the Texas independence forces, and was killed at the Alamo. Yet, such colorful figures mask the tension between Native American culture and the culture of liberal democracy. William Henry Harrison defeated the Native Americans under the leadership of the Prophet in 1811. The Black Hawk War pushed Sauk and Fox Native Americans across the Mississippi in 1832. Seminoles in Florida under the leadership of Osceola began attacks in November of 1836, protesting their forced removal. The unpopular war ended in August of 1842, with Native Americans from Florida sent to Oklahoma. It cost the United States government 1500 soldiers. The massacre of Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians at Sand Creek occurred in 1864, with 900 cavalry killing 150-500 men, women, and children, while nine soldiers died, while the two tribes awaited surrender terms.

The United States participated in the slave trade and practiced slavery. It took a civil war to end it. One needs to remember that one of the primary functions of government is to intervene when one group of citizens oppresses another. Although the Civil War represents an assertion of federal rights over state rights, it did so because it was morally obligated to intervene in oppression. Several founders, such as Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and especially John Adams, wanted to

abolish slavery in 1776. Southern political leaders blocked their efforts. A failure of political courage and leadership at the national level in the early 1800's led to the costliest war in terms of lives lost in American history.

The United States ended a war started by Imperial Japan by dropping atomic bombs on Nagasaki and Hiroshima. Many on the Left consider this act an absolute evil. However, anyone who has read of the painful decision that Democrat President Harry Truman made at the time knows the moral dilemma he felt. One at least needs to consider this use of atomic weapons a wise use of them.

The Cold War, fought against a communist system that sought world domination and the obliteration of freedom and the denial of the worth and dignity of the individual, was a moral war as liberal democracy fought for its existence. However, this war led the United States into unholy alliances and into serious errors in judgment. In presenting the following material, I do not make a judgment as to whether each act was justified for the sake of the defeat of the Soviet empire.

The CIA overthrew the elected government of Iran in 1953 and the elected government of Guatemala in 1954.

The United States propped up dictators like Marcos and Diem, and killed rulers like Lumumba.

The United States participated in the death of a million Vietnamese out of its fear of Soviet expansion and as part of the Cold War. The Vietnam War, part of the Cold War, was an atrocity of which America must always be ashamed.

Do such failures mean that the United States should not have fought the Cold War? Personally, I think that the war against Stalin was as legitimate and as needed as the

war against Hitler. Unfortunately, many on the political Left have come to accept a view that the Cold War was nothing more than a drive for world domination by America. The testimonies of persons within the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe ought to be enough to discredit such thinking. The rage that many Americans felt toward the Vietnam War led to many positive reforms of American involvement in foreign countries. However, the Leftist calls for revolution in the 1960's, fortunately, were not successful.

The atrocities of the Nazi's and the existence of the iron curtain and the Gulag in the Soviet Union encouraged the vision for human rights throughout the world to take on new force. The 1948 UN Declaration of Human Rights and the 1975 Helsinki Accords have made human rights a part of the dialogue among nations.

Intellectual alienation

Many intellectually alienated Americans ask the question sincerely: What has America done for the world? It reminds me of the funny scene in *Life of Brian.* Reg, portrayed by John Cleese, says the Romans "bled us white, the bastards. They've taken everything we've owned. And not just from us, from our fathers, and our fathers' fathers." After a funny expansion of the generations involved, Reg says, "And what have they ever given us in return?" After a pause, a member of the People's Front of Judea answers, "The aqueduct." "Oh yeah, yeah, they did give us that," Reg quietly acknowledges. "And sanitation," another mentions. Soon, others continue with other Roman improvements, such the roads, irrigation, medicine, education, wine, and public baths. The final response is, "And it's safe to walk in the streets at night now, Reg." Finally, Francis responds, "Yeah, they certainly know how to keep order. Let's face it, they're the only ones who could in a place like this." Exasperated, Reg asks, "Alright, but

apart from the sanitation, the medicine, education, wine, public order, irrigation, roads, the fresh water system, and public health, what have the Romans ever done for us?"

Intellectual alienation occurs through the ideological rejection of American culture, history, and society. This form of alienation is something that ought to concern us all. Intellectuals in the Western tradition have always asked tough questions of their society. They think critically, constructively, give good reasons rooted in experience, and seek wisdom. The skepticism that is part of academic life has turned to antipathy toward the beliefs and values that established this country. Instead of seeking wisdom and truth, they have wedded themselves to an ideology developed out of antipathy toward the Western philosophical tradition and toward the Christian tradition. Lionel Trilling aptly coined the phrase "adversary culture" in order to describe the form the academic community has taken. The adversary approach by many academics started with sympathy toward the Soviet revolution on the part of many intellectuals, continued through the period of Stalin and the Cold War, and continues today in the acceptance of the basic Marxist critique of liberal democracy.

How does one make something look bad that is responsible for so much good? The intellectual step this involves is the sin of anger. The success of America for its citizens, the good that America has done in the world, stands as a massive refutation of every pet "critical" theory of liberal democracy, Western philosophy, Christianity, and free enterprise. These persons focus upon the imperfection of America, normally focusing upon obvious sins of American history. They cling to these wrongs in a way that creates animosity. They convince themselves that America is morally no better than any

other empire in world history. America is oppressive in a different way than the Soviet Union had been, but is still oppressive.

When America creates, humanity as a whole receives the benefit. The quality of life for nearly all six billion people on the planet would be unimaginably worse if it were not for the ingenuity of the American mind. One needs only to read a brief history of invention and innovation to realize that many of the technical advances humanity has made originate in the United States.

Humanity benefits as Americans have put themselves on the creative edge of exploration, whether of the American frontier, flying, the North Pole, and flight to other planets.

Humanity receives the benefit of American entertainment, such as music and sports.

Humanity benefits through American engineers and construction.

Humanity has benefited from the unmatched military might of the United States to liberate other people, such as slaves in the South, helped end colonialism in World War I, helped end Nazi and fascist imperialism in World War II, and ended the barbarism of Soviet Communism in the Cold War. Would the world be a better place if America had lost any of these wars? Further, with the hegemony of American military might, American territory has not expanded one inch. American armies fight for liberty, not for empire, conquest, or colonies.

American economic power has served to benefit the world. It did not occur by accident. The rule of law, patent and copyright protection, and a restrained government, are the traditions that accelerated the prosperity of the nation. Elsewhere, individual

success results in reward for the State. Therefore, the incentive to pursue success is weak. In the United States, people receive the reward for their own labor and creativity. Therefore, the pursuit of success is something in which all citizens can participate. America generates the products much of humanity buys, the food they eat, and the jobs in which they work. Misery in the world would increase if one took the American economy out of the equation.

American generosity benefits humanity. While many people point only to government aid, the amount of private charitable contributions is impressive, equaling $200 billion in 2000.

America remains the place where people want to emigrate.

The American political philosophy of self-government, combined with respect by the government of the individual rights of its citizens, remains the best possible system of political organization throughout the world. America is the one example of a revolution that worked.

The world benefits from advances in medicine made by America.

As hard as it may be for intellectually alienated Americans to believe, Jeane Kirkpatrick was right: Americans need to face the truth about themselves, no matter how pleasant it is.

Signs of a problem

I want to begin by suggesting than many persons participate reasonably well in American society. Participation means the following. They accept their basic freedom to build their life around values and goals important to them. In fact, if Americans understand anything, they understand they are free. Most understand the value of a good

education, both formally through school, and continuing to educate themselves throughout life. Most Americans pursue careers and other economic decisions with a reasonable amount of care. After all, they have the freedom to invest their lives in economic pursuits that matter to them. They spend much of their lives working. They try to spend it in jobs about which they care. They engage in forming the economic plan of the country by working for particular companies, purchasing stock in various companies, and becoming a consumer of particular goods and services. Some are in management positions. As such, they must imagine what potential customers will want and offer it to them at a price they will find attractive. As managers, they must consider the work environment and the pay they offer to employees. Some Americans are employees, and as such consider the pay offered, enjoyment of the work environment, expectations of management, and their relationships with fellow workers. Americans take their leisure time seriously, supporting a variety of sports teams, musicians, and other forms of entertainment. Americans pursue the intimate friendship and relationships of family. Americans often wait until relatively late in life to marry, suggesting great care in selecting the right person. They weigh carefully how many children they will have together. They often work hard at keeping their relationship together. As part of their basic plan of life, they pursue meaning and happiness in life. They often do this with a feeling for a religious connection in their lives. Americans participate in the electoral process by voting, or, alternatively, by intentionally leaving the election of political leaders to others by not voting. Americans often take their politics quite seriously. They develop various political ideas, undoubtedly based upon both experience and what they consider as a reasonable consideration of the information they have. Some Americans

pay no attention to news. Some become news junkies. Many keep their awareness of the news at a reasonable amount, and focus on it only during elections. Most Americans do not resort to violence over any of these areas of life. They believe that they can have a reasonable degree of happiness by participating in society in these ways.

I am confident that, with every point in the previous paragraph, someone could say "yes, but," and point to something negative. In fact, I will do so in a few moments. Human life is not easy. Suffering touches all of us, the wealthy and powerful, just as much as the poor and disadvantaged. We develop our basic plan of life through observation and evaluation of others and through our experiences of life. However, I invite you to consider the possibility that many Americans participate reasonably well in their society. People on both the Left and the Right often paint a picture of American society as in crisis, and therefore in need of radical change, transformation, and conversion. Such an approach often sells in the publishing world and in politics. I think many people need to pause, look around them, and see the high degree of reasonably happy participation in American society.

I offer the above considerations as a way of setting in context a chapter in which I want to consider signs of alienation in American society. We experience alienation when we do not experience our social world as a human, and therefore imperfect, home. My concern is that society needs to face honestly and courageously those who have not found participation in it a means to happiness, hope, joy, meaning, and fulfillment.

The social setting of individuals confronts them as an objective reality. Our questioning of the world in which we live includes pondering the positive and negative evaluation of the culture in which we live. We are creatures who have the capacity to

pause and reflect on questions like, “Why is the world the way it is?” Our dissatisfaction with the world generally and the social world in particular is a sign, from the Christian perspective, that this world is not our eternal home. It reminds us of the imperfection of this human world, and the destiny of wholeness we find with God in eternity. Part of maturing in life is learning to love the world God that God loves, to appreciate the time and place in which we live, to accept the imperfections of this world, and to work toward improving the corner of the world we influence.

The experience of alienation from the social world is one in which the process of dealing with the imperfections of the social world stops at anger for the world as it is. This angry and alienated individual forgets that, by his or her participation in the social world, they co-produce the social world with other citizens. They are angry at a social world they help to create through their participation in it. The way in which this alienation often occurs is to turn the social world into an inhuman machine that grinds people down and oppresses them. The mistake of this way of thinking is that the social world is a human creation. If human beings do not like elements of the social world, they can work toward improving it. The social world then ceases to be an open arena in which individuals expand their lives in meaningful activity. Consequently, for the alienated individual in the social world, individuals are no longer subjects and actors in history, but objects acted upon by distant forces.

If one stops at alienation with the social world, one has a false experience of the world. The contradiction such people experience is that they genuinely believe they are alienated from a social world they help create through their participation in it. Their participation is uniquely their activity that assists the social world in being what it is.

Their social world would not exist without their individual participation, combined with the activity and participation of many other citizens. The alienated person lives with the paradox of participating in building a social world that they genuinely believe denies them. In a society like that of America, this human participation results in cultural, economic, and political institutions that reflect the sins of the people, as well as their hopes and dreams.

The founders set America in the right direction.

First, they established political institutions that diffused power, acknowledged basic rights, and implemented self-government. They instituted a system of checks and balances and a federal system that disbursed political power throughout the country and among many people.

Second, beginning with their rebellion against English taxes, the founders established an economic system that limited the involvement of government in the economic market place. “The great art of government is not to govern too much,” was an observation made by Constitutional Convention delegate Charles Cotesworth Pinckney. In *The Federalist Papers* 21 we find a philosophy of taxation that understood that taxation has a natural upper limit when it ceases to achieve its end, namely, the increase of revenue. They understood that equality of opportunity was the most important guarantee government might provide. Inequality of condition is part of the nature of things.

Third, the government threw off the bondage religion represented in Europe while also recognizing the importance of religion and morality for the growth of liberty.

Christianity retains a greater influence over the lives of the American people than it does in any country.

Fourth, the founders had a foreign policy that discouraged international entanglements and empire in favor of pursuit of national interests. The Farewell Address of George Washington offered the advice to "steer clear of permanent Alliances" best exemplifies the thoughts of the founders on foreign affairs.

One can explain American greatness largely by the principles embedded in its founding. I would suggest that many of the current problems of America are the result of straying from the path laid down by the founders. C. S. Lewis once remarked in *Mere Christianity*:

> We all want progress. But progress means getting nearer to the place where you want to be. And if you have taken a wrong turning, then to go forward does not get you any nearer. If you're on the wrong road, progress means doing an about-turn and walking back to the right road; and in that case the man who turns back soonest is the most progressive man.

To form a more perfect union

"To form a more perfect union" refers to the proper combination of powers granted to the various levels of government and recognizing that citizens have wide discretion in the way they live their lives. In the United States, this means that political power distributes itself in both a horizontal and vertical fashion. Federal power is a legislative balance between representatives chosen based upon the population of the states and senators chosen based on equal representation of the states. Federal power also distributes itself over the legal system as represented in the Supreme Court, the Legislature, and the Executive. The vertical distribution is one stated in the tenth amendment: The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor

prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people. The founders of the country clearly wanted to give the federal government more power than it had under the Articles of Confederation. The addition of the Bill of Rights also showed that the founders had concerns that the newly strengthened federal government would become too powerful, probably at the expense of the states and the people.

Article I, Section 8, describes the enumerated powers of Congress, powers the executive branch is to administer. I invite the reader to note the powers Congress has vested in itself, without authority from the Constitution. First, Congress (not the President) has the power to tax, impose duties, and pay the debts. Second, Congress has the power to borrow money. Third, Congress has the power to regulate commerce with foreign countries, between the sates, and with Native Americans. Fourth, Congress has the power to establish a uniform rule of naturalization. Fifth, Congress has the power to establish uniform laws concerning bankruptcy. Sixth, Congress has the power to coin money and fix the standard of weights and measures. Seventh, Congress has the power to punish counterfeiting. Eighth, Congress has the power to establish post offices and road to connect them. Ninth, Congress has the power to promote the progress of science and other “useful arts” by providing rules for copyright and protection of invention. Tenth, Congress has the power to establish courts below the Supreme Court. Eleventh, Congress has the power to declare war. Twelfth, Congress has the power to support armies, maintain a navy, make rules for military forces, call forth the militia, suppress insurrections, repel invasions, and work with the states regarding the militia. Thirteenth, Congress has legislative authority over the District of Columbia. Fourteenth, Congress

has the power to make laws the laws necessary to executing the previous enumerated powers.

Here is the point. If the federal government has a responsibility to force the people to provide for their retirement, provide for education, provide for the poor, or to have health care, the country needs to have a public debate about this expansion of the responsibilities of the federal government. If America is to commit troops overseas, then let the Congress debate a declaration of war. When the constitution becomes whatever the present generation of political leaders says it means, then we lose the rules that protect individuals from the tendency to grow in its power. To make it even clearer, the reason for public debate is that the country ought to take any expansion of federal power with deliberation and rational discourse, mindful that the greatest threat to liberty is the federal government.

Adam Smith, in *The Wealth of Nations,* made it clear that the federal government has three purposes. The first is to defend citizens from foreign aggression, a role that needs no expansion. The second is to intervene when one citizen attempts to oppress another citizen. Obvious examples in American history are slavery, laws of segregation, racism, sexism, and same-gender discrimination. The organization of labor unions and laws that concern the work environment are part of this role of government. The system of courts and laws is a major way for the government to ensure that all interactions within the country occur with known rules. The third is public works and institutions. Obvious examples are roads and bridges, as well as education, Federal Reserve banking system, and other agencies that the government requires to administer its responsibilities.

Debate in the political environment has long centered on the problem of how far one can take federal action and intervention in the family, in societal relationships, and in economic relationships. I think one can make a strong case for the limited role of umpire rather than the expansive role of parent. Max Gammon, a British doctor who studied their health delivery system, suggested the theory of bureaucratic displacement. The more bureaucracy an organization has, the greater the extent to which useless work tends to displace useful work. One will find such results in any organization, but it operates in spades in government.

As is true with most religions, Christians affirm that their ultimate allegiance is to God. Yet, Christians also affirm allegiance to the government that has the responsibility of providing for public order. The government has the responsibility of protecting the rights of individuals. Citizens have the right to information from government deliberations in due order and process.

The Bill of Rights enshrines those rights of individuals that no level of government is to infringe upon. In the first amendment, Congress shall not establish a religion, or prohibit the free exercise of it. Congress shall make no law that abridges freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of the people to assemble peaceably, or to petition the government for a redress of grievances. In a modern setting, one might say that everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion. In the matter of religion, the government ought to respect the freedom of citizens to adopt a religion or belief of their choice. The government ought to recognize the freedom of religions to teach, practice, observe, and worship, in ways private and public, the way they choose. This freedom includes the right to hold opinions without interference. They also have the

right to express freely their opinion, although such freedom needs to recognize respect for the rights and reputations of others and protection of national security. In the second amendment, the states shall of the right to a militia; the people shall of the right to keep and bear arms. In the third amendment, even in time of war, soldiers cannot demand residence in the home of a citizen. In the ninth amendment, the enumeration of individual rights in the Bill of Rights is not a complete list of their rights, and thus, the people retain many other rights not specifically mentioned. In the tenth amendment, powers not specifically delegated to the federal government belong to the states or to the people.

The fact is that the Constitution enumerates limited and defined powers to the federal government, represented in the Congress, Executive, and Judiciary. The powers that remain for the states are many and undefined. The powers of the federal government focus upon foreign affairs, such as war, peace, negotiation, and foreign commerce. The Constitution envisions that the power of taxation is primarily for these purposes. The powers of the states relate primarily to domestic affairs, concerning the lives, liberties, and properties of the people, and thus concern the improvement of the lives of the people within their jurisdictions. In times of war, the powers of the federal government will reach their greatest extent. In times of peace, the powers of the states will be at their greatest extent. Since times of peace should be greater than times of war, the Constitution envisions that the states will have an advantage over the federal government. By the way, this paragraph is a summary of Federalist Paper 45, by John Madison.

Separation of church and state

Human beings have an inherent dignity and equality that governments must learn to respect. Governments have a moral responsibility to respect the rights of each citizen,

regardless of race, gender, language, or religion. Governments must accept their role in disregarding and infringing upon such human rights and fundamental freedoms. In particular, individuals have the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion. Failure to respect them has brought war and suffering upon humanity. Governments need to recognize that religion is a fundamental way in which people develop their worldview or conception of life. Governments need to collaborate with other groups in society to promote understanding, tolerance, and respect relating to freedom of religion. Freedom of religion should also contribute to the attainment of peace and justice. Freedom of religion means the freedom to practice individually and corporately in worship, observance, practice, and teaching. To expand upon what this freedom means, religions have the right to maintain places of worship, to provide charitable services, to produce and disseminate materials related to their beliefs, to receive voluntary financial contributions, to train leaders, to observe holy days, and to have national and international organizational connections. Government ought not to practice coercion in matters of religion. Governments need to recognize that discrimination based on religion offends human dignity. It becomes an obstacle to friendly and peaceful relations between nations.

On the other hand, free and secular governments have long recognized the social benefits of communities of faith. The bonds that hold a free society together are quite slender. They rely upon values like that of respect and tolerance. For that reason, they have extended tax exemptions to the churches, as well as other non-profit organizations. As long as secular governments continue recognizing their social benefit, religious communities will continue to experience such a financial benefit.

The Christian churches at their best recognize that the separation of church and state, the multiplicity of denominations, and the multiplicity of religions, remind us that we have not arrived at the end of human history. The reign of God is not here and now, but awaits its fulfillment. Only God can bring such a future into reality. An individual or a church cannot make the future God intends a reality today. Thus, such liberty that liberal democracy encourages throughout society recognizes that the quest for the true and the good are still in process. It further recognizes no individual or institution will actualize truth and goodness fully. This is, after all, still a human world.

The only kind of social world that will fulfill the intent of God is one that respects the liberty and dignity of the individual. The social order will need to improve the condition of individuals. Yet, individualism is not enough. We need an ethic of responsibility and participation. What is the meaning of our feverish activity in a modern world? In one sense, human activity is a reflection of the image of God. Nature and society needs to reflect the best for humanity. Reflection upon human dignity, human community, and the profound nature of human activity, is the basis for the relationship between church and world. The church intends to have a healing and elevating influence upon society. Slender threads hold human society together. The church seeks to make those threads a bit stronger. Human activity in modern society is often a flurry of activity. The church seeks to place that activity in a context of meaning and purpose.

For example, the emphasis in modern society upon individual rights meets a friend in the church. Granted, the church will not accept the idea that liberty means exemption from any sense of responsibility to nature or to the social world. Yet, the church also is a witness to the maturing of human personality in the context of a

community. It recognizes that finite things can never satisfy human desire. No matter how sophisticated we get, we will want to know the meaning of life, activity, and death. The church is a witness that only eternity can provide the context for the discovery of meaning.

Another example is the manner in which the church seeks to influence society. Granted, neither Jesus nor the apostles provided the church with a political or economic agenda. It does not have the power of coercion; it ought not to seek such power. The church reminds society, however, that it must always take seriously the poor and alienated in their midst. The church also reminds political and economic leaders that the unity society needs to hold together are more than external. It requires unity of mind and heart as well. Internal qualities, such as faith, hope, and love, have an important influence upon the manner in which society holds together. In a modern and democratic world, the primary task of the church is to assist in people finding meaning in the midst of all their activity, strengthening the internal bonds that help society function in a reasonably healthy way, and to offer the possibility of healing to those alienated from the modern social world. The church does all of this through helping people recognize their worth and dignity as individuals created in the image of God. The very existence of the church throughout the world is a sign of the future destiny of humanity toward unity. Yet, the church needs to encourage its own members to bring healing to the divisions in which they too often participate as part of their individual cultures.

A third example is that of human activity. The church itself does not separate worship and piety on the one hand and professional and social activity on the other. Being Christian does not mean shirking responsibility for the care of the natural, social,

economic, and political world. The church helps its members by providing the context for forming a well-informed Christian conscience that discerns the will and purpose of God. Christians in their work places, families, political engagements, involvement in civil society, will bring the enlightenment of Christian wisdom to those settings. Ideally, Christians will bring a Christian spirit into all their social engagements. They bring their witness to Christ in the midst of human society.

A fourth example is that the church recognizes the help it receives from the modern social world. Because of the universal character of the church, it recognizes the difference between communist, fascist, and military dictatorships on the one hand and the modern social world of democratic institutions rooted in freedom of the individual on the other. The nature of the weapons humans have at their disposal also suggests that a small group can inflict great harm. Many Christians suffer martyrdom because of the form their social world takes. Many Christians suffer poverty and persecution because of social conditions. In such situations, Christians, other religious people, and other people of good will, have every right to defend self and neighbor in order to prevent greater evil to befall themselves and their social world. The presence of war is a paradox in the human quest for peace. Even the most aggressive persons who use their power to bring wars of aggression, ultimately desire through their conquest or sedition to bring a condition of peace. It is, of course, often a twisted desire, confusing conformity and coerced obedience with genuine peace. Genuine peace arises from respect for each other, in the midst of diversity and difference.

The difference is rather obvious to the global church. The church values the freedom offered in the latter form of social world, and would seek its adoption in every

nation. It realizes the benefits it receives from the improvement of every day life, technology, advances in science, and so on.

We need to clarify the relationship between the church, culture, and the future rule of God. This distinction between church and state has its foundation in the distinction between the future God intends and the fractured nature of *human* reality on the other. The distinction between the ultimate and the penultimate has its source in Christian reflection. The difference between present individual and corporate life is the reason why the church must exist as an independent entity along side the political order. The church cannot be the bridge between the secular and the religious. Hegel thought that the concept of human worth and dignity bridged the gap. One might also suggest that the concept of human rights could bridge the gap. Where human rights still fulfill their function as protective rights that transcend all present orders and flow from our human destiny in God, resisting the totalitarian claims of the state, they witness to the provisional nature of every given constitutional order, even though this order may seek to validate itself by an appeal to human rights. Where people call out for the righting of an injustice, where it is a matter of respect for human rights and improving the established order, Christians and their churches should certainly be vocal in support. However, all such reforms will come within the confines of the provisional nature of our human orders and cannot establish the full and final rule of God. Christian faith recognizes that all human ordering of social life is provisional. The church must always exist, therefore, as a unique society alongside the political, economic, and civic order. The church by its existence demonstrates the continuing broken character of every human social ordering. By its difference from culture, the church helps humanize the cultural order in relation to

individual citizens, for the church reminds the social order that it has not achieved its destiny in the rule of God. Totalitarian systems rightly recognize the danger of Christianity to their political system at this point.

The difference of the church from the state helps to humanize the political order in its relation to individual citizens, because the existence of the church reminds the state of the difference between its own order and our social destiny. Humanitarianism and political liberation are not the primary missions of the church. After all, the church and the Christian must always keep the overly optimistic dimensions of science, technology, and political ideology at a comfortable distance from the mission of the church.

Despite many discussions about the relationship between church and the world, nothing is more unclear than the nature of their relationship to each other. To be church is to be in the world and to be with others who have no relationship to it and may hate it. If God has a vision of human destiny involving wholeness in which we find our individuality respected and genuine community, then the church is a partner in developing that story. One service the church renders is its recognition that God determines the story, not the church.

Christian involvement in political life

Every government ought to allow the participation of people of faith in their political process. Persons of faith have the responsibility to offer practical reasons for the policies they support, and thus refuse to rely upon their religious principles in order to justify policy.

I would now like to offer a few comments on the involvement of Christians in the political power structures of modernity. Considering that even today, many pre-modern

societies do not allow such involvement, the church and Christians ought to begin with some gratitude for modernity and its openness to the church at this level.

If Christians understand "modernity" (society rooted in liberty) only as a rebellion against Christianity, then the church has little reason for its involvement in secular society, and the secular society has little reason to be open to such involvement. In fact, I will show later that many of the values of liberal democracy have touching points with Christianity. Further, the philosophical ground on which free society stands involves common human desires for liberty, common move toward rational discourse, and a belief in general morality of respect, tolerance, and citizenship. Enlightenment thinkers ignored the denominations and their disputes. They arrived at that point as Christianity splintered into sects and involved itself in wars that resolved nothing.

We find ourselves perplexed by the issue of church and society. Christians of all political perspectives have become nervous that the faith and their scripture apply to so little of the concerns that we face as a culture. The Bible and much of Christian history existed within cultures that deserved a counter-culture or sub-culture, or a desire to overthrow that culture. One wonders if the secular culture of the west, as it orients itself around freedom, pluralism, and democratic institutions, deserves overthrow, an alternative culture, or, as I would suggest, people working within it who move toward responsible use of the precious gift of freedom that we have. Culture continues to differentiate and specialize through its institutions. No institution provides a central organizing authority. In such a society, the church does not have the role of providing a foundation for the culture, or even an alternative culture. The Bible makes us uncomfortable with its focus upon God and upon Christ. Politics and economics seem so

much more exciting and important than matters like meaning, purpose, values, helping experience God and become followers of Jesus Christ. The Bible concerns itself with matters that embarrass us.

We can observe the power of liberal and conservative political ideology by their willingness to subsume matters of religious faith to that ideology. The interaction of religion and politics has taken a dangerous turn. People with liberal and conservative political ideology have used religion to advance their own power. Theologians speak of a desire to change social structures. However, which vision of social structure will they implement? On the religious left, we have many black religious organizations and liberal Protestant denominations. They use the language of compassion to advance the cause of increased power to Washington. Political or liberation theology castigates liberal Protestantism as a theology of the middle class and calls for an overthrow of modernism. Christianity is about compassion to the poor and the marginal persons of society. However, many have stooped to the level of using political power to gain that which we can accomplish only through transformation of heart and life. On the religious right, we have certain evangelical groups who use the language of morality and standards to advance their political cause. They rightly judge that the moral standards of our culture have declined. However, they also want to use the power of Washington to force external compliance to those values. To mention the most controversial of issues, religious organizations need to focus upon a change of heart and behavior in the matter of abortion.

Unfortunately, many people who genuinely care about their culture end up using religion simply as a means for improving culture. People often want to use religion as a

means of propping up some perceived weakness in culture. This functional view of religion is far from what any devout participant in any religion would consider as the purpose of a religious community. This failure to recognize religion as helping culture to determine proper ends, rather than making culture itself the end, is an important distinction to make. The mistake is that divine presence is not limited to religious institutions. The church becomes demonic when it limits divine activity to the realm of the church. The secular cannot avoid the move toward the holy, just as the holy cannot avoid the secular. For me, one of the gifts of Christianity is that it makes relative any social order in which it exists. It recognizes a life-giving power and meaning from beyond cultural values and institutions. The church is a force within society moving against power concentrating into the hands of a few and implementing its absolute ideological vision. Morality depends upon sufficiently vital communities that can produce well-lived lives. Christian ethics calls us to learn what it means to live rightly in the world.

My concern is that the quest for power by both political liberals and political conservatives to control the future of the nation forces religious institutions to serve a political ideology. However, those who value religious institutions know that the believer owes allegiance only to God.

For people of faith, the force of law and politics will not bring the desired moral transformation of our culture that our religious institutions seek. That kind of transformation can only come from within. The church needs to address the needs of the human heart and behavior. When churches expend too much energy toward political power, they lose moral authority. Politics is messy business. Anyone who has been

involved in political power struggles in the church knows how unchristian the Christian community can become. The church throughout history has been at its best when it directs its attention on the moral and spiritual renewal of the human heart and life. The nation needs the liberal message of compassion and the conservative message of moral standards addressed to the free choice of individuals rather than political power. The nation needs a compassionate people. The nation needs a moral people. However, the needs of the nation do not motivate religious institutions. The allegiance of religious institutions is to God, not the nation. The nation may not value such contributions by the church. However, the church continues faithfully to carry out its mission. Such goals are worthy and important. Precisely because of their importance, the nation also needs the federal government to stay out of the way.

People who have liberal or conservative principles believe strongly in what they believe. They are willing to call themselves moderates, when they are, in reality, liberal or conservative. They are willing to use religious faith to advance their desire to determine the future of the nation. The moderate must decide in a case-by-case basis what they believe. Religious institutions must decide if they want to be a pawn the quest for power.

Many segments of the American public would like to separate religion from any influence upon political discourse. After September 11, 2001, one can understand why. This attack discredited Islam or its fundamentalist elements. In Nablus, a city within the Palestinian Authority, thousands of people immediately took to the street with glee, chanting, “Allah is great.” The chair of the Syrian Arab Writers Association wrote, “My lungs filled with air and I breathed in relief, as I have never breathed before.” An editorial

in the Egyptian newspaper *Al-Maydan,* commented, "Millions across the world shouted in joy: 'America has been hit'! This call expressed the sentiments of millions whom the American master had treated with tyranny, arrogance, bullying, conceit, deceit and bad taste." Another Egyptian paper had a columnist who wrote, "I am happy about the American dead. If Osama bin Laden is proven to be involved in the attacks on the U. S., I will make a statue of him and set in my home."

The attacks also discredited all religious engagement in the public square. Religion often taps into the worst of human nature. Adherents to a religion often find it difficult to respect those with whom they disagree. After all, religious people believe they have discovered the truth. Although they can give good reasons to others for their belief, its root is often tradition, faith or feeling. How does one rationally evaluate such things?

The other difficulty with religion in the public square is that when the religious person proposes policy based upon faith or what he or she believes to be the will of God, how does one engage in discussion and compromise? In other words, political, military, and economic leaders require use of what philosophers call practical reason. This means attention to data, facts, statistics, systematic plans, and goals. Practical reason requires the use of discourse with each other and respect for the ideas and values of others. How does one discuss rationally with someone who says that God told him to fly a plane into the trade towers or the Pentagon? How does one deal rationally with the President of Iran, who says that Allah wants him to remove Israel from the Middle East and America from the world? In terms of domestic politics, how does one deal rationally with someone who believes that America should have federal budget Jesus would like? How does one deal rationally with someone who says that the September 11, 2001 attacks were the judgment

of God upon America for abortion, or that the Hurricane Katrina was the judgment of God upon America for involvement in Iraq? Such comments actually trivialize beliefs that are formative for billions of people around the globe.

I can understand the suspicion many secular persons have toward the involvement of religious persons in the public square. The primary Christian responsibility is to grow in love toward God and grow in love toward the neighbor. Yet, sometimes, the only reason for proposing a course of action is to quote from their religious texts. The Christian Right often says things that, to other Christians, seem quite unchristian and uncharitable toward those with whom they disagree. The Christian Left often reduces economics and politics to self-serving quotes from the Bible. For both, I would suggest that our political ideas arise far more from our present experience and our evaluation of our cultural setting than they do from a reading of the Bible. Our quotes from the Bible and our attempt to claim that Jesus is in our corner, shows the weakness of our arguments. If we can offer good reasons for a course of action, we need to let them stand. The reference to the Bible and God is often a way for us to shout our beliefs loudly, rather than to enter rational and respectful discourse with our ideological opponents. If we are to face the problems of objective and subjective alienation, we will need rational and respectful discourse, rather than claims to divine inspiration. Religious persons often construct castles in the air with their dreams of an Islamic State or the Kingdom of God. We need to keep our discourse firmly grounded in what is best for this human, and therefore imperfect, world. Utopian dreams, whether secular as in Marx, or religious, have little to do with solving quite real problems in this world.

Religion can contribute to humanizing political discourse. In our time, such a statement needs some defense.

Robert Bolt developed a play about Thomas More called *A Man For All Seasons*. There is a powerful moment when Thomas explains to his daughter, Margaret, why he cannot take Henry VIII's Oath of Supremacy, even though his refusal means his own death. He says to her, "There comes a time in a man's life when he holds himself like water cupped in his hands, and if he lets his hands part and the water falls out, he will never get himself back again."

We are at one of those junctions in history when we are holding our past, our future, our integrity, and ourselves in the palm of our own hands. This is a moment when if we allow that integrity to fall out, we might never recover it in the same way.

September 11, 2001 has discredited religion in the minds of many. We saw religion at its worst, in which God and religion dedicate themselves to hatred, murder, and violence.

Secularity has become an increasingly live option for many Americans. Consequently, I want to share why many of your neighbors value their faith. One of the things we look for in religion is transformation. We look for a call to move beyond ourselves, to lose the confines of our own selfishness and our own limitations for a moment. I think God has made us to find meaning and happiness in moving beyond ourselves in a compassionate way. Further, we look for religion to make us better people. We have a feeling that there is some better way of being human.

Religion should not do harm in the world; it should make a positive difference. All religious persons need to have the courage to make their religion and their faith effective in this lost, suffering, and terrifying world.

However, we cannot transform the world and make our religions work for us unless we are ourselves a haven for loving kindness in the world. That is what the religious person should be. Very often, we see religious people on television protesting and complaining, and horrified about something, even full of rage. As a Christian, I would say to the church, should the church not be a haven from violence and fearfulness in the world.

All of this assumes that the answer to bad religion is not to rid humanity of religion, but to help move humanity toward good religion. By that, I do not mean a particular faith. Rather, I mean a way of being religious in a multi-religious and secular setting. In terms of the present options available, this means that religion is good if it can function in a healthy way within a liberal democracy. The religion is bad if it cannot do so. The rights and privileges that a society bestows upon individuals within society indicate the esteem that society holds for them. From a Christian perspective, all persons are valuable as children of God. The churches have a moral imperative to work toward societies that offer this respect to their citizens.

Ethical considerations are an important part of our involvement in public discourse as Christians. Such matters are the subject of this chapter. My purpose is to invite citizens to consider a new of involving themselves in political conversation, one that longs to place some sense of meaning and ethics at the heart of our discourse in the public square. In that sense, one who is secular, one who is on the political Left or Right,

may find some help in this book. When we have lost our sense of why we engage in political discourse, everything becomes possible in gaining power.

Having offered all of these cautions, I want to suggest that religion has much contribute to public discourse. In America, religion led the anti-slavery movement, it led to reduction of the consumption of alcohol in America by the end of the 1800's (prohibition), it led the way for the right of women to vote, it led the way in the Civil Rights movement in the 1950-1970 period, and it participated in the anti-war in Vietnam movement. Many Christian denominations led the way in urging the government to act on behalf of the poor, the handicapped, the children, and the elderly. Many denominations opposed the entry of the United States into the present war in Iraq. Now, when I say "religion," I do not mean all religion. Some fundamentalist elements of the Christian religion opposed every extension of liberty to people America excluded from its political and economic life. However, many people of faith believed their religion led to social implications. They offered good reasons for the country to move their direction, and the country eventually experienced the reform suggested.

Further, many of the social expressions of human alienation are areas in which religion can offer its vision and its healing influence. Religion can help Americans face any socially oppressive instinct they have as a challenge and with courage. Religion can help Americans face their materialism and consumerism by showing the way to a life of generosity. Religion can show the way to enjoy people and the environment without exploiting them for selfish purpose. Religion can show the way to appreciate talent in the arts without obsessive attention to it. Religion can show the way to healthy intimate relationships that one needs in family. Religion can practice compassion toward the poor

by mentoring them toward gaining the life skills and education needed to rise out of poverty. Religion can show the way to respect between men and women. Religion can show the way to respect for the worth and dignity for all the children of God, regardless of race, ethnic background, sexual orientation, gender, or economic class.

I would now like to offer a few comments on the involvement of Christians in the political power structures of liberal democracy. I share the concern of Jimmy Carter in *Our Endangered Values,* that the rise of fundamentalist involvement in the public square is a matter of concern. Now, why would I, a political conservative, share the concern of Jimmy Carter, a political liberal?

One concern I have is for the Christian community. Those of fundamental persuasion have every right to their perspective on the Bible and Christian community. However, they have given the impression that they have the right to define genuine Christianity. They dismiss the liberal Protestant tradition as a heretical version of Christianity. They ignore Roman Catholic and Orthodox traditions, except at the point of a political alliance against abortion. Further, many within the movement seem to lack basic love and respect for the neighbor. In particular, I think of people like W. A. Criswell, Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, James Dobson, and D. James Kennedy. I also think of authors like Rushdoony, who seems to represent a Christian Reconstruction persuasion, also called Dominion Theology or Theonomy, which would seek to replace the American constitutional order with a new conception of biblical law.[6] The Coalition for Revival, with an Internet presence at www.reformation.net, presents its statements of fundamentalist worldviews and calls to action. Mel White has offered a helpful and personal look at how such persons differ from people like Billy Graham, an evangelical

[6] Murray Friedman, *The Neoconservative Revolution*, p. 213.

for whom he continues to have high regard. The early fundamentals as taught by Princeton theologians like Charles Hodge, Benjamin Warfield, and J. Gresham Machen. However, the new fundamentalist believes in separation from other Christians, wants to rescue the church, and wants to make America a Christian nation. Fortunately, most politically conservative Christians do not find this new version of Calvinism persuasive.

As a political conservative, I have concern for their power within the Republican Party. The alliance of new neo-conservatives (neo-cons) with fundamentalist religion is a potent political force in the Republican Party. I cannot go so far as to call it an "American Theocracy," as Kevin Phillips has done. Mel White has warned his readers that it would be dangerous to underestimate the political power of these new fundamentalists. At the risk of doing so, I do not consider the imposition of fundamentalist moral values upon the country even a remote possibility. Mr. White has helped me understand why people are so afraid of the religious right. However, I suspect that he has taken some things they say about homosexuality far too personally. Many fundamentalists have a personal hatred of homosexual persons. However, many other Christians simply believe that marriage is between a man and a woman, and that this is the only Christian option for the expression of human sexuality. Such persons may love him as a person created by God, but believe he does need to repent of his homosexual practice. In any case, when the men mentioned above start forming a military branch for their churches and para-church organizations, I will take seriously his charge of fascist tendencies. The Coalition for Renewal, while it has policies I hope never become the law of the land, makes clear that the imposition of biblical law on the country would only come with the votes of the people. I may have too much confidence in the voters at this point, but just as I hope that the people do not vote

in socialism, I hope that their vision of biblical law does not become the law of the land. Fundamentalist preachers have a role to play in spirited public debate, but clearly not a dominant role. Many elected representatives within the Republican Party would not subscribe to important aspects of the fundamentalist agenda, including that of abortion, prayer in schools, and promotion of various forms of creationism. Many Republicans focus on their concern for economic liberty, rejecting the moral and religious agenda of fundamentalism. However, I am concerned with the growth of fundamentalist and evangelical religion in the Republican Party. Frankly, devout persons do not usually make good rulers on the world-historical stage. As one Christian who is a political conservative, but who arrived at my politics through secular means, I find these developments disturbing. Government has far more to do with monetary and fiscal policy, providing a context for economic growth, insuring the liberties of its citizens, and providing for the national defense, than it does with the shaping of moral values.

Considering that even today, many pre-modern societies in the world do not allow any genuine participation of their citizens in the political structures of the country, the church and Christians ought to begin with some gratitude for liberal democracy and its openness to the church at this level. It ought to have gratitude for the economic liberty that has led to the increased wealth of American religions.

We find ourselves perplexed by the issue of church and society. Christians of all political perspectives have become nervous that the faith and their scripture apply to so little of the concerns that we face as a culture. So many forms of government today and in human history deserved counter-culture movements that worked for their destruction. One wonders if the secular culture of the west, as it orients itself around freedom,

pluralism, and democratic institutions, deserves such treatment. Alternatively, as I would suggest, it may be far more responsible on the part of Christians and other religious persons to work within it, moving people toward responsible use of the precious gift of freedom that they have. Culture continues to differentiate and specialize through its institutions. No institution provides a central organizing authority. In such a society, the church does not have the role of providing a foundation for the culture, or even an alternative culture.

The language of religion is different from that of the language of the public square. What is meaningful in one place is not meaningful in the other. The Bible makes many uncomfortable with its focus upon God and upon Christ. Politics and economics seem so much more exciting and important than matters like meaning, purpose, values, helping people experience God and become followers of Jesus Christ. The Bible concerns itself with matters that embarrass us.

Political ideology in liberal democracy is a powerful intellectual center for people. We can observe the power of liberal and conservative political ideology by their willingness to subsume matters of religious faith to that ideology. The interaction of religion and politics has taken a dangerous turn. People with liberal and conservative political ideology have used religion to advance their own power. Theologians speak of a desire to change social structures. However, which vision of social structure will they implement? On the religious left, we have many black religious organizations and liberal Protestant denominations. They use the language of compassion to advance the cause of increased power to Washington. Political or liberation theology castigates liberal Protestantism as a theology of the middle class and calls for an overthrow of

modernism. Christianity is about compassion to the poor and the marginal persons of society. However, many have stooped to the level of using political power to gain that which we can accomplish only through transformation of heart and life. On the religious right, we have certain evangelical groups who use the language of morality and standards to advance their political cause. They rightly judge that the moral standards of our culture have declined. However, they also want to use the power of Washington to force external compliance to those values.

Unfortunately, many people who genuinely care about their culture end up using religion simply as a means for improving culture. People often want to use religion as a means of propping up some perceived weakness in culture. This functional view of religion is far from what any devout participant in any religion would consider as the purpose of a religious community. This failure to recognize religion as helping culture to determine proper ends, rather than making culture itself the end, is an important distinction to make. The mistake is that divine presence is not limited to religious institutions.

My concern is that the quest for power by both political liberals and political conservatives to control the future of the nation forces religious institutions to serve a political ideology. However, those who value religious institutions know that the believer owes allegiance only to God.

For people of faith, the force of law and politics will not bring the desired moral transformation of our culture that our religious institutions seek. That kind of transformation can only come from within. The church needs to address the needs of the human heart and behavior. When churches expend too much energy toward political

power, they lose moral authority. Politics is messy business. Anyone who has been involved in political power struggles in the church knows how unchristian the Christian community can become. The church throughout history has been at its best when it directs its attention on the moral and spiritual renewal of the human heart and life. The nation needs the liberal message of compassion and the conservative message of moral standards addressed to the free choice of individuals rather than political power. The nation needs a compassionate people. The nation needs a moral people. However, the needs of the nation do not motivate religious institutions. The allegiance of religious institutions is to God, not the nation. The nation may not value such contributions by the church. However, the church continues faithfully to carry out its mission. Such goals are worthy and important. Precisely because of their importance, the nation also needs the federal government to stay out of the way.

If religion is to show the way, it will need to be the community now that it hopes the nation can become. This requires of the church love for the country. I do not know how any church anywhere in the world can minister with the people in the country without a genuine love and appreciation for it. If the church is to be a healing influence in American society, it will need to begin with love. Grounded in this love, it can help people deal with the various sicknesses to which they might succumb, precisely by their participation in American society. In other words, the churches can help their people come to a spiritual balance that will bring healing, health, joy, faith, justice, compassion, and hope. The churches will disagree over the ways to end some forms of alienation. However, the churches can agree over many of the means to bring healing.

Christians will need to have serious self-examination in order to offer a healing and liberating message today. For example, many conservative Christians focus upon in-house religious language, personal piety, and a lifestyle often similar to any secular person. Sadly, many mega-churches have preached a health and wealth gospel precisely at a time when the churches need to point the way to living generously with the wealth their parishioners have. In a time when many Americans split into ideological camps, the churches often have little regard for the common faith in Christ that unites them. Churches that could show the way to living with tolerance and diversity have instead encouraged divisiveness and harshness. Churches that could show the way for America to be a healthy partner in the world have too often baptized everything the American government does. To emphasize this problem, the religious Left joined the secular Left in supporting everything Bill Clinton did, and the religious Right joined the secular Right in baptizing everything Reagan and George W. Bush did.

The religious Left often has the rhetoric for the poor, peace, and justice. It often lacks the passion to show the way. A common saying is that the Liberal loves the poor and the poor love the evangelical, the charismatic, the Pentecostal, and the fundamentalist. While the religious Left claims to fight for peace and justice, they often act within the denominations they lead with lack of charity and justice toward those with whom they disagree. They call themselves progressive and those with whom they differ reactionary. Their elitism and willingness to judge those with whom they differ betrays lack of respect and willingness to divide rather than live in peace. Enthralled with their critique of liberal democracy, the Left often minimizes the importance of the personal transformation needed to bring healing and liberation as people face the challenges of

living in a free society. They often find offence in the politically correct analysis of the moment, instead of focusing on ways to deal with the real problems of alienation represented by poverty, racism, and sexism, as well as the other forms of alienation in materialism, consumerism, pursuit of pleasure, and the breakdown of family.

I would like to suggest few guiding principles for Christians in America.

Christians need to value the principles of the Declaration of Independence and the US Constitution so much that they will refuse to impose the Bible in its place. In particular, they will not seek to impose their understanding of beliefs and values derived from it.

Christians need to value the religious liberty guaranteed by the Constitution so highly that they refuse to make America a Christian nation.

Christians need to value a country in which no denomination or religion is the politically established religion of the nation. Christians must not use the power of government to impose Christian beliefs and values upon others.

Christians must resist any sect that claims it has defined the beliefs and values of the Bible. Christians of various denominational histories and theological persuasions need to stay in communication with each other.

Christians need to reclaim the Bible as the primary inspiration for many reforms that make this country a better place. A short list would include might include renunciation of slavery, non-violent resistance, prison reform, expansion of the right to vote, the dignity of all human beings as created in the image of God, liberty of conscience, the importance of family, the protection of the environment, and the just use of power.

Christians must reclaim the prophetic notion of justice and mercy that has led them to compassion for those in need of liberation.

I want to conclude this chapter with a simple appeal. Regardless of ideological commitments, churches can unite on some important areas of concern.

Churches can work together to strengthen the bonds of family, care for children, and respect for the commitment of husband and wife.

Churches can work together to decrease lifestyles that lead to abortion and the spread of aids.

Churches can work together to reduce addiction to drugs. Statistics suggest that 300,000 deaths have a relationship to tobacco, something between 50,000 and 200,000 deaths one can attribute to alcohol, and 3500 attributed to illegal drugs. No one dies from an overdose of marijuana. Any substance abuse decreases the quality of human life, of course, but we do need to keep the discussion in perspective.

Churches can work together to teach and model a life of excellence, as Paul indicated in Philippians 4:8, including moral standards of faithfulness, telling the truth, compassion, civic responsibility, and respect.

Churches can work together to heal the sickness of materialism and consumerism.

Churches can work together to have a healthy enjoyment of the world while rejecting the abuse of the earth. This world is our home.

Churches can work together to encourage profitable businesses to also show a healthy regard for the health of the community in which the do business. This means churches will reject the notion that we can do away with the profit mechanism, something

that seems essential for a growing economy. However, part of that profitability for any business is that its workers and consumers have a healthy environment.

Churches can work together to remove any barriers that symbolize the oppression of racism and sexism in law or in attitude.

Churches can work together to unite with the churches around the world, broadening the American awareness of the actions of the government in the world. Christianity is a global religion. Christians need to cultivate awareness that God is not for America, any more than God is for a denomination or any other country.

Churches can continue their work for peaceful resolution to local, national, and international conflict. At the same time, churches will need to recognize that a discerning use of American military power in the world can help bring peace and justice.

The many churches throughout the country can become agents of change, healing, and liberation, enabling people to live reasonably well and happily in modern American society. I think this is important for the American church because God has placed us in this time and place. We need to be responsible stewards of the time and space God has given us. However, the churches are building communities and people destined to live with God in eternity. Such a vision keeps in perspective the mission of the churches. The mission is not America, but the reign of God over the earth.

To establish justice

"Establish justice" refers to the establishment of a system of laws and courts that protects citizens from government abuses as well as from criminal elements.

The Constitution establishes that Congress shall have the power to organize a system of courts, beginning with the Supreme Court, and including other court

jurisdictions as needed. The Bill of Rights has a concern for the accused. This concern has spread to the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. In the fourth amendment, the people have a right to the safety of their person, home, papers, other possessions, and thus against the government doing an unreasonable search and seizure of them. Thus, one could reasonably conclude that persons have the right to privacy. The government can receive a warrant for such actions only upon probable cause. In the fifth amendment, people accused of a capital or other infamous crime only through indictment by a grand jury. The government shall not indict persons for the same offense twice. The government cannot compel anyone to be a witness against himself or herself. The government cannot deprive citizens of life, liberty, or property, without due process. Today, we might say that the government should deprive no one of their liberty through arbitrary arrest or detention. The government cannot take private property for public use unless it provides fair compensation. One might today reasonably conclude that every person has the right to liberty, including the right of non-citizens to have the right to have the government recognize them as persons before the law. In the sixth amendment, the accused has the right to a speedy and public trial by an impartial jury, to the government providing prompt information as to the nature and cause of the accusation, to have direct confrontation with the witnesses against him or her, to obtain favorable witnesses, and to have the assistance of defense counsel. Today, one might reasonably add that government owes to arrested persons respect for the inherent dignity of all persons. Arrested persons have the right to a presumption of innocence before the law. In the seventh amendment, even in cases involving common law, the government must preserve the right to a trial by jury. They have the right not to testify against themselves. In the eighth amendment, the

government shall not impose excessive bail or fines. The government shall not inflict cruel and unusual punishment. One might reasonably extend this amendment to torture, which would itself be cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.

Citizens have the right of dissent from government decisions, although violence ought not to be an option in a free society. Such dissent ought to show respect for the laws, since the people have elected their officials to office.

As part of the system of justice, an important role for government is to protect all persons from encroachment upon their personal and property rights. For such reasons, governments have established mechanisms of law enforcement and courts. A wide array of sentencing options serves to express community outrage, incapacitate dangerous offenders, deter crime, and offer opportunities for rehabilitation. Government ought to design its justice measures to reduce and eliminate crime, consistent with respect for the basic freedom of persons. Therefore, discrimination and persecution are misuses of these mechanisms of government. To the extent that social and economic conditions may lead to crime, the government ought to commit itself to remove those conditions. The best option is for law enforcements officials and courts to have positive interaction with the community. Retributive justice holds the offender accountable to the state, and punishment emphasizes accountability. Restorative justice seeks to hold the offender accountable to the victim and community. It seeks to repair the damage and bring healing. Given the situation, either form of the administration of justice may be appropriate.

Human beings form societies in order to live well and happily. However, some persons choose the path of harming others in order to benefit themselves. They do not

respect the rights of others to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. They do not respect the property of others. Society has the right to protect its citizens from such persons. The values taught in family and religious communities, we hope, will provide the moral foundation to say no to such a life. However, if that does not happen, government and the legal system have the responsibility to protect its citizens. In doing so, the government and the legal system demonstrate respect for both the victim and the criminal. If government fails in protecting citizens from the enemies of those who do not participate in society, they weaken the bonds that hold the society together.

Criminals have already determined what is in their own best interest; society has no right to mold the individual into what is best for society. Criminals are autonomous persons with choices to make like everyone else. For some people, the angry response contained in their violence toward the person and property of others is their way to get society to notice them. In fact, to rehabilitate suggests the society has the right to use the individual to further its own ends. In reality, individuals have the right to respect, apart from usefulness to society. Society punishes criminals simply because they have committed crimes. Punishment needs no other justification. The criminal should suffer in proportion to the crime, which is why capital punishment is a just use of societal power. If society treats individuals with respect, it will respect them as rational beings making choices consistent with what they conceive to be their best interest. Rational beings are responsible for their behavior and society may justly hold them accountable for that behavior when it turns criminal. Society has no obligation to treat people alike, regardless of how they act. The behavior of the other person properly determines, in part, how others treat them. When rational people treat others in criminal ways, they need to

experience what it would be like if others treated them the same way, that is, through punishment. Society allows citizens to determine to some degree how it will treat them. Theories that deny to punishment any expiatory character appear to subvert the social order.

In most cases, we recognize the motives of the accused person in determining guilt or innocence and in fixing the level of wrongdoing. In this sense, our system respects the dignity of each individual as the author of his or her own character. Thus, if it appears that some legitimate basis for the anger exists, the forces that shaped the convicted person come into play. In the same way, the impact of the crime upon its victims also becomes part of sentencing.

Retributive justice maintains that proportionate punishment is a morally acceptable response to crime, regardless of whether the punishment causes any tangible benefits.

In ethics and law, "Let the punishment fit the crime" is the principle that the severity of penalty for a misdeed or wrongdoing should be reasonable and proportional to the severity of the infraction. The concept is common to most cultures throughout the world. Its presence in the ancient Jewish culture is shown by its inclusion in the law of Moses, specifically in Deuteronomy 19:17-21, which includes the punishments of "life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot." The U.S. Constitution includes a ban on "cruel and unusual punishment." Many other documents reflect this value in the world's cultures. However, the judgment of whether a punishment is appropriately severe can vary greatly between cultures and individuals.

Proportionality requires that the level of punishment be scaled relative to the severity of the offending behavior. However, this does not mean that the punishment has to be equivalent to the crime. A retributive system must punish severe crime more harshly than minor crime, but retributivists differ about how harsh or soft the system should be overall.

Traditionally, philosophers of punishment have contrasted retributivism with utilitarianism. For utilitarians, punishment is forward-looking, justified by a purported ability to achieve future social benefits, such as crime reduction. For retributionists, punishment is backward-looking, and strictly for punishing crimes according to their severity.

Depending on the retributivist, the crime's level of severity might be determined by the amount of harm, unfair advantage or moral imbalance the crime caused.
In the early period of all systems of law the redress of wrongs takes precedence over the enforcement of contract rights, and a rough sense of justice demands the infliction of proportionate loss and pain on the aggressor as he has inflicted on his victim. Hence the prominence of the "lex talionis" in ancient law. The Bible is no exception: in its oldest form it included the "lex talionis," the law of "measure for measure" (this is only the literal translation of middah ke-neged middah).

In the 19th century, philosopher Immanuel Kant wrote in *The Metaphysical Elements of Justice* of retribution as a legal principle:

> "Judicial punishment can never be used merely as a means to promote some other good for the criminal himself or for civil society, but instead it must in all cases be imposed on him only on the ground that he has committed a crime."

Immanuel Kant regards punishment as a matter of justice. He states that if the guilty are not punished, justice is not done. (Rachels, James 2007, The Elements of Moral Philosophy.)

There are two distinct "flavors" of retributive justice. The classical definition embraces the idea that the amount of punishment must be proportional to the amount of harm caused by the offence. A more recent version, advocated by Michael Davis, dismisses this idea and replaces it with the idea that the amount of punishment must be proportional to the amount of unfair advantage gained by the wrongdoer. Davis introduced this version of retributive justice in the early 1980s, at a time when retributive justice was making a resurgence within the philosophy of law community, perhaps due to the practical failings of reform theory in the previous decades. This was to many a breath of fresh air into a theory that had been all but abandoned decades prior, particularly in the United States. There currently appears to be a greater amount of discussion about the difference between these two flavors of retribution than between retribution itself and the other theories of punishment.

Restorative justice is commonly known as a theory of criminal justice that focuses on crime as an act against another individual or community rather than the state. The victim plays a major role in the process and may receive some type of restitution from the offender. Today, however, "Restorative justice is a broad term which encompasses a growing social movement to institutionalize peaceful approaches to harm, problem-solving and violations of legal and human rights. These range from international peacemaking tribunals such as the South Africa Truth and Reconciliation Commission to innovations within our criminal justice system, schools, social services and communities.

Rather than privileging the law, professionals and the state, restorative resolutions engage those who are harmed, wrongdoers and their affected communities in search of solutions that promote repair, reconciliation and the rebuilding of relationships. Restorative justice seeks to build partnerships to reestablish mutual responsibility for constructive responses to wrongdoing within our communities. Restorative approaches seek a balanced approach to the needs of the victim, wrongdoer and community through processes that preserve the safety and dignity of all" [Suffolk University, College of Arts & Sciences, Center for Restorative Justice].

Restorative justice takes many different forms, but all systems have some aspects in common. In criminal cases, victims have an opportunity to express the full impact of the crime upon their lives, to receive answers to any lingering questions about the incident, and to participate in holding the offender accountable for his or her actions. Offenders can tell their story of why the crime occurred and how it has affected their lives. They are given an opportunity to make things right with the victim—to the degree possible—through some form of compensation.

In social justice cases, impoverished people such as foster children are given the opportunity to describe what they hope for their futures and make concrete plans for transitioning out of state custody in a group process with their supporters [Walker, L, 2005, Voma Connections No. 21].

In criminal cases, types of compensation include, but are not limited to: money, community service in general, community service specific to the deed, self-education to prevent recidivism, and/or expression of remorse.

In social justice cases, restorative justice is used for problem solving [Braithwaite, J. 2002].

Restorative justice sometimes happens in the context of a courtroom, and sometimes within a community or nonprofit organization.

In the courtroom, the process might look like this: For petty or first-time offenses, a case may be referred to restorative justice as a pretrial diversion, with charges being dismissed after fulfillment of the restitution agreement. In more serious cases, restorative justice may be part of a sentence that includes prison time or other punishments.

In the community, concerned individuals meet with all affected parties to determine what the experience and impact of the crime were for all. Those called out for offences listen to others' experiences first, preferably until they are able to reflect and feel what those experiences were for the others. Then they speak to their experience: how it was for them to do what they did. A plan is made for prevention of future occurrences, and for the offender to heal the damage to the injured parties. All agree. Community members hold offender accountable for adherence to the plan.

Most academics and government definitions of restorative justice restrict that definition to those programs that involve an encounter between the offender and the victim. Some grassroots organizations, like the Mennonite Central Committee Canada, define restorative justice programs less on who the clientele of the program is, and more on the programs values. This means that programs that only serve victims (or offenders for that matter), but have a restorative framework, are considered a restorative justice program. Restorative justice pioneer Howard Zehr was honored as the recipient of the 2006 Community of Christ International Peace Award.

Restorative approaches to crime date back thousands of years:

> In North America, the first traces of restorative justice have been attributed to the First Nations communities.
> In Israel, the Pentateuch specified restitution for property crimes.
> In Sumer, the Code of Ur-Nammu (c. 2060 BC) required restitution for offenses of violence.
> In Babylon, the Code of Hammurabi (c. 1700 BC) prescribed restitution as a sanction for property offenses.
> In Rome, the Twelve Tables (449 BC) ordered convicted thieves to pay double the value of stolen goods.
> In Germany, tribal laws promulgated by King Clovis I (496 AD) called for restitutional sanctions for both violent and nonviolent offenses.
> In England, the Laws of Ethelbert of Kent (c. 600 AD) included detailed restitution schedules.
> Retributive justice began to replace this system following the Norman invasion of Britain. William the Conqueror's son, Henry I, issued laws detailing offenses against the “king’s peace.” By the end of the 11th century, crime was no longer perceived as injurious to persons, but rather was seen as an offense against the state.

In the 20th century, restorative justice started becoming more popular. Communities in Canada, the United States, Great Britain, and Australia began instituting restorative justice programs. These ostensibly began with the landmark use of victim offender mediation, in 1974, of a vandalism case in Kitchener, Ontario. Since then, victim offender mediation programs have been successfully addressing both youth and adult crimes, including a range of crimes from very minor to extremely serious crimes (such as murder and sex crimes). It has also been introduced in several schools in England, one being St Augustine of Canterbury (2004) Taunton, Somerset led by a serving police officer, Andy Jenrick BA (Hons). Due to positive results, all secondary schools in Somerset, UK, will receive RJ Training (2006 - 09) This process is currently being duplicated in all schools in the Hull area, implemented by the International Institute of Restorative Practices (IIRP) and restorative practices are used in the Chard and Ilminster Community Justice Panel,Somerset led by Val Keitch. A 2004 study by the

University of Minnesota School of Social Work found that thirty U.S. States now have restorative justice at least mentioned in their state statutes.

Restorative Justice processes have several manifestations.

Victim-offender mediation, or VOM (also called victim-offender dialogue, victim-offender conferencing, victim-offender reconciliation, or restorative justice dialogue), is usually a face-to-face meeting, in the presence of a trained mediator, between the victim of a crime and the person who committed that crime. This system generally involves a small number of participants, and often is the only option available to incarcerated offenders, due to limits on visitors.

Family group conferencing (FGC) has a much wider circle of participants than VOM. In addition to the primary victim and offender, participants may include people connected to the victim, the offender's family members, and others connected to the offender. FGC is often the most appropriate system for juvenile cases, due to the important role of the family in a juvenile offender's life. An example of the use of FGC in a juvenile justice setting can be found in the statutory scheme operating in the State of New South Wales in Australia - under the Young Offenders Act 1997. The New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics & Research has favorably evaluated the scheme.

A community restorative board typically is composed of a small group of citizens, prepared for this function by intensive training, who conduct public, face-to-face meetings with offenders sentenced by the court to participate in the process. During a meeting, board members discuss with the offender the nature of the offense and its negative consequences. Then board members develop a set of proposed sanctions which they discuss with the offender, until they reach agreement on the specific actions the

offender will take within a given time period to make reparation for the crime. Subsequently, the offender must document his or her progress in fulfilling the terms of the agreement. After the stipulated period of time has passed, the board submits a report to the court on the offender's compliance with the agreed upon sanctions. At this point, the board's involvement with the offender is ended.

Some judicial systems only support monetary restitution agreements. For instance, if the victim and offender agreed that the offender would pay $100.00 and mow the victim's lawn 5 times during the months of June and July, the court would only note the $100.00 as restitution. To avoid difficulty in collecting the full restitution, some agreements specify a larger monetary amount (e.g. $200.00) to be paid if the non-monetary restitution is not provided.

A third theory of justice is transformative justice. Transformative justice is a general philosophical strategy for responding to conflicts. It takes the principles and practices of restorative justice beyond the criminal justice system. It applies to areas such as environmental law, corporate law, labor-management relations, consumer bankruptcy and debt, and family law. Transformative justice uses a systems approach, seeking to see problems, as not only the beginning of the crime but also the causes of crime, and tries to treat an offense as a transformative relational and educational opportunity for victims, offenders and all other members of the affected community. In theory, a transformative justice model can apply even between peoples with no prior contact.

It can be seen as a general philosophical strategy for responding to conflicts akin to peacemaking. Transformative justice is concerned with root causes and comprehensive outcomes. It is akin to healing justice more than other alternatives to imprisonment.

In contrast to restorative justice, no quantification or assessment of loss or harms or any assignment of the role of victim is made, and no attempt to compare the past (historical) and future (normative or predicted) conditions is made either. The victim is not normally part of the transformative process, but can choose to be. Participants agree only on what constitutes effective harms reduction, which may include separating or isolating perpetrator and victim.

In contrast to equity-restorative justice, there is no social definition of equity imposed on participants. Each is free to decide on some "new normal" state of being for themselves, and is not pressured to agree on it. A victim may continue to seek revenge or desire punishment, e.g. as in retributive justice systems. A perpetrator may lack remorse and may say that they lack remorse.

As in transformative learning, one works from desired future states back to the present steps required to reach them. The issue is not whether the perpetrator may make a choice to do something similar again, but whether the community is willing to support the victim and perpetrator in some form of contact. It is possible for the community to choose to support the perpetrator and not the victim as defined by the law, but if they do so they may be obligated to support some re-definition of "equity" so that law comes back into line with the social concept of equity. For example, it is possible for the community to support imprisonment as a means of isolation but not punishment.

This model may have roots in the work of Samuel Tuke and B. F. Skinner but departs by relying on individual volunteers' caring and supporting capacity, not any socially imposed etiquette derived from civilization. Ruth Morris and Giselle Dias of the Canadian Quakers have advanced transformative justice theory.

Capital punishment

If a government uses the death penalty, it ought to impose it only for the most serious crimes. However, as part of a system of justice, the death penalty is a tool that governments ought to ban. It denies the possibility of redemption and reconciliation. It shows no respect for the life of the person executed, thereby disrespecting the convict, just as the convict disrespected the life of his or her victim.

Capital punishment, also called the death penalty, is the execution of a convicted criminal by the state as punishment for crimes known as capital crimes or capital offences. Historically, the execution of criminals and political opponents was used by nearly all societies—both to punish crime and to suppress political dissent. Among countries around the world, almost all European and many Pacific Area states (including Australia, New Zealand and Timor Leste), and Canada have abolished capital punishment. In Latin America, most states have completely abolished the use of capital punishment, while some countries, however, like Brazil, allow for capital punishment only in exceptional situations, such as treason committed during wartime. The United States, Guatemala, most of the Caribbean and the majority of democracies in Asia (e.g. Japan and India) and Africa (e.g. Botswana and Zambia) retain it.

In most places that practice capital punishment today, the death penalty is reserved as punishment for premeditated murder, espionage, treason, or as part of military justice. In some countries, sexual crimes, such as adultery and sodomy, carry the death penalty, as do religious crimes such as apostasy, the formal renunciation of one's religion. In many retentionist countries (countries that use the death penalty), drug trafficking is also a capital offense. In China human trafficking and serious cases of corruption are also punished by the death penalty. In militaries around the world courts-

martial have imposed death sentences for offenses such as cowardice, desertion, insubordination, and mutiny.

Capital punishment is a very contentious issue. Supporters of capital punishment argue that it deters crime, prevents recidivism, and is an appropriate form of punishment for the crime of murder. Opponents of capital punishment argue that it does not deter criminals more than life imprisonment, violates human rights, leads to executions of some who are wrongfully convicted, and discriminates against minorities and the poor.

The latest country to abolish the death penalty for all crimes was Rwanda in mid 2007. On October 10th, 2007, the World Day against the Death Penalty will focus on the proposed UN General Assembly's 62nd session resolution for a universal moratorium on executions.

A number of regional conventions prohibit the death penalty, most notably, the Sixth Protocol (abolition in time of peace) and the Thirteenth Protocol (abolition in all circumstances) to the European Convention on Human Rights. However, most relevant, operative international treaties do not require its prohibition for cases of serious crime, most notably, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. This instead has, in common with several other treaties, an optional protocol prohibiting capital punishment and promoting its wider abolition.

The official teachings of Judaism approve the death penalty in principle but the standard of proof required for application of death penalty is extremely stringent, and in practice, it has been abolished by various Talmudic decisions, making the situations in which a death sentence could be passed effectively impossible and hypothetical. "Forty years before the destruction" of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 CE, i.e. in 30 CE, the

Sanhedrin effectively abolished capital punishment, making it a hypothetical upper limit on the severity of punishment, fitting in finality for God alone to use, not fallible people.

In law schools everywhere, students read the famous quotation from the 12th Century legal scholar, Maimonides,

> "It is better and more satisfactory to acquit a thousand guilty persons than to put a single innocent one to death."

Maimonides argued that executing a defendant on anything less than absolute certainty would lead to a slippery slope of decreasing burdens of proof, until we would be convicting merely "according to the judge's caprice." (Caprice of all kinds is more visible now with computers, statistics, DNA evidence, and new discovery laws directed at prosecutors' files.) Maimonides was concerned about the need for the law to guard itself in public perceptions, to preserve its majesty and retain the people's respect.

Scholars of Islam hold it to be permissible but the victim or the family of the victim has the right to pardon. In Islamic jurisprudence (Fiqh), to forbid what is not forbidden is wrong. Consequently, it is impossible to make a case for abolition of the death penalty, which is explicitly endorsed.

Sharia Law or Islamic law may require capital punishment, there is great variation within Islamic nations as to actual capital punishment. Apostasy in Islam and Stoning to death in Islam are controversial topics. Furthermore, as expressed in the Qur'an, capital punishment is condoned. Although the Qur'an prescribes the death penalty for several hadd (fixed) crimes—including robbery, adultery, and apostasy of Islam—murder is not among them. Instead, murder is treated as a civil crime and is covered by the law of qisas (retaliation), whereby the relatives of the victim decide whether the offender is punished with death by the authorities or made to pay diyah (wergild) as compensation.

Although some interpret that John 8:7 of the Bible condemns the death penalty, others consider Romans 13:3-4 to support it; Christian positions on this, as on many social issues, vary. The promulgator of Christianity, Jesus of Nazareth, was executed by crucifixion, and that method of execution became a symbol for Christianity (see Passion (Christianity)). Furthermore, numerous Catholic saints have been martyred by usage of the death penalty.

The Roman Catholic Church traditionally accepted capital punishment as per the theology of Thomas Aquinas (who accepted the death penalty as a necessary deterrent and prevention method, but not as the means of vengeance; see also Aquinas and the death penalty). Under the pontificate of Pope John Paul II, this position was refined. As stated in John Paul II's encyclical Evangelium Vitae, the Roman Catholic Church holds that capital punishment should be avoided unless it is the only way to defend society from the offender in question, and that with today's penal system such a situation requiring an execution is either rare or non-existent. The Catechism of the Catholic Church says "Assuming that the guilty party's identity and responsibility have been fully determined, the traditional teaching of the Church does not exclude recourse to the death penalty, if this is the only possible way of effectively defending human lives against the unjust aggressor. If, however, nonlethal means are sufficient to defend and protect people's safety from the aggressor, authority will limit itself to such means, as these are more in keeping with the concrete conditions of the common good and are more in conformity to the dignity of the human person."

The Lambeth Conference of Anglican and Episcopalian bishops condemned the death penalty in 1988.

The United Methodist Church, along with other Methodist churches, also condemns capital punishment, saying that it cannot accept retribution or social vengeance as a reason for taking human life. The Church also holds that the death penalty falls unfairly and unequally upon marginalized persons including the poor, the uneducated, ethnic and religious minorities, and persons with mental and emotional illnesses. The General Conference of the United Methodist Church calls for its bishops to uphold opposition to capital punishment and for governments to enact an immediate moratorium on carrying out the death penalty sentence.

In a 1991 social policy statement, the ELCA officially took a stand to oppose the death penalty. It states that revenge is a primary motivation for capital punishment policy and that true healing can only take place through repentance and forgiveness.

Several key leaders early in the Protestant Reformation, including Martin Luther and John Calvin, followed the traditional reasoning in favor of capital punishment, and the Lutheran Church's Augsburg Confession explicitly defended it. Some Protestant groups have cited Genesis 9:5-6, Romans 13:3-4, and Leviticus 20:1-27 as the basis for permitting the death penalty.

On the other hand, the Mennonites and Friends have opposed the death penalty since their founding. They continue to oppose it strongly today. These groups, along with other Christians opposed to capital punishment, have cited Christ's Sermon on the Mount (transcribed in Mathew Chapter 5-7) and Sermon on the Plain (transcribed in Luke 6:17-49). In both sermons, Christ tells his followers to turn the other cheek and to love their enemies, which these groups believe mandates nonviolence, including opposition to the death penalty.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) holds a neutral position on the death penalty.

Mark 15:33-40 (NRSV)

[33] When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. [34] At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" [35] When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "Listen, he is calling for Elijah." [36] And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down." [37] Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. [38] And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. [39] Now when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"

[40] There were also women looking on from a distance; among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome.

Matthew 5:43-44 (NRSV)

[43] "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' [44] But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

Romans 12:17-19 (NRSV)

[17] Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. [18] If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. [19] Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."

1 Peter 3:8-9 (NRSV)

[8] Finally, all of you, have unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another, a tender heart, and a humble mind. [9] Do not repay evil for evil or abuse for abuse; but, on the contrary, repay with a blessing. It is for this that you were called—that you might inherit a blessing.

Matthew 5:23-24 (NRSV)

[23] So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, [24] leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift.

John 8:1-11 (NRSV)

[1] while Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. [2] Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him and he sat down and began to teach them. [3] The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery; and making her stand before all of them, [4] they said to him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of

> committing adultery. [5] Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such
> women. Now what do you say?" [6] They said this to test him, so that they
> might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote
> with his finger on the ground. [7] When they kept on questioning him, he
> straightened up and said to them, "Let anyone among you who is without
> sin be the first to throw a stone at her." [8] And once again he bent down and
> wrote on the ground. [9] When they heard it, they went away, one by one,
> beginning with the elders; and Jesus was left alone with the woman
> standing before him. [10] Jesus straightened up and said to her, "Woman,
> where are they? Has no one condemned you?" [11] She said, "No one, sir."
> And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now
> on do not sin again."]]

This issue is a good example of one in which the only way the church can give any response is through political institutions. I do not want to give a full exposition on the issue. Rather, I want to offer some hints of a possible way to treat the apostolic witness.

The selection of texts suggests the direction I would move on this matter. I do not find the Old Testament helpful in considering matters of Christian ethics. In particular, I would consider capital punishment as quite inconsistent with the New Testament. Jesus made it clear that the law and prophets hang on love toward God and neighbor. This suggests that if a behavior is not consistent with such love, Christians need to set it aside, even if commanded in the Old Testament.

I find it rather difficult for us as Christians to consider capital punishment as a just use of government power, while at the same time we honor Christ, whom government killed through unjust legal proceedings. Further, the value of every individual life ought to be primary on the agenda of the church. The fact that Jesus does not recommend the death penalty for an act punishable by death also ought to be normative.

However, such considerations do not address the true concerns of many in our society and many in the church. I have had members of the parishes I serve have children murdered, and the murderer is free to engage in communal life. When I see men who

abduct children and then murder them, what I want is for that person to die immediately. When authorities arrested that person several times for robbery, rape, and other crimes, and finally murders, I want American justice to have radical surgery. I also want the church to be angry about the loss of innocent life that criminals perpetrate upon our neighbors.

The question is whether the justice system will protect society from violent persons. Frankly, I think the church on this point needs to stand strongly with the victims of crime. Our love for our neighbors needs to extend to putting a barrier between the neighbor and those who have no moral problem with doing harm. If the church were to stand firmly against taking a human life through execution, it must also stand for isolating violent criminals from the rest of society. I would argue that opposition to capital punishment and standing with potential victims of crime must go together in terms of the witness of the church to society.

I write these things, recognizing that many Christians would find profound disagreement with me at a political level.

To insure domestic tranquility

"Insure domestic tranquility" refers to the non-violent exercise of rights within the country in the formation of families, in the building of society, in protection of the natural environment, and in the economic health of the country.

From the standpoint of being a Christian in a free society, how can we insure domestic tranquility by a proper relationship to the environment? In what I have to say here, using theological language, may offend some. However, I also it will help the

Christian community struggle with the theological rationale for Christians and churches to collaborate with other citizens and groups to improve American life.

First, in to insure domestic tranquility, government and citizens need to do their part in strengthening the family. Human beings are social creatures, slowly maturing physically, intellectually, and spiritually through the various stages of childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. The family is the primary nurturing community in which this maturity takes place, although other forms of Christian community may also prove meaningful to some. Such nurturing communities encourage development of the fullest potential in individuals. All persons are important, for God has given them individual life in creation, loved them in Jesus Christ, and transforms them through the Holy Spirit. God does all of this with no reflection upon their personal merit. Therefore, Christians support social climates in which nurturing communities can thrive, fulfilling their divine purpose of valuing the worth and dignity of each individual.

Words are powerful, and thus, as Christians and as members of a free society, we ought to encourage all persons to use words that reflect the value of each person. We ought to reject derogatory uses of words, especially concerning race, nationality, ethnic background, gender, sexuality, and physical difference.

The family is the basic human community that nurtures and sustains persons in mutual love, responsibility, respect, and fidelity. Both father and mother are important for all children. Of course, “family” may be the nuclear family, the extended family, families with adopted children, single parents, stepfamilies, and couples without children. Men and women share the responsibility of being parents. The broader social community, the economic community, and the political community have an interest in maintaining and

strengthening family relationships, with the intent that all persons in the family mature as persons.

Some Christians and other religious communities have found new patterns of Christian nurturing communities such as Koinonia Farms, certain monastic and other religious orders, and some types of corporate church life. Churches with open minds and hearts will seek ways of understanding the needs and concerns of such Christian groups, finding ways of ministering to them and through them.

As Christians and as members of a free society, marriage remains a covenant that a man and woman express in love, mutual support, personal commitment, and shared fidelity. From a Christian perspective, God's plan is for lifelong, faithful marriage. Churches must be on the forefront of premarital and postmarital counseling in order to create and preserve strong marriages. God's blessing rests upon such marriage, whether or not there are children of the union. We ought to set aside social norms that assume different standards for women than for men in marriage.

The laws of civil society ought to define marriage as the union of one man and one woman.

When a married couple is estranged beyond reconciliation, even after thoughtful consideration and counsel, divorce is a regrettable alternative in the midst of brokenness. Such a decision is devastating emotionally, spiritually, and economically. Divorce rates are too high. Partners in a divorce ought to use methods of mediation to minimize the adversarial nature and faultfinding that are often part of our current judicial processes. Although divorce publicly declares that a marriage no longer exists, other covenantal relationships resulting from the marriage remain, such as the nurture and support of

children and extended family ties. Couples ought to engage in respectful negotiations in deciding the custody of minor children. Churches and society ought to support the consideration of either or both parents for this responsibility in order that custody not be reduced to financial support, control, manipulation or retaliation. The welfare of each child is the most important consideration. Clearly, divorce ought not to preclude a new marriage. The churches and society ought to minister compassionately to those in the process of divorce, as well as members of divorced and remarried families, in a community of faith where all persons share God's grace.

The single life is a valuable and worthwhile contribution to human community. It can involve a full dedication of oneself to God and to some form of ministry. At the same time, intimate, faithful, and sexual relationship with a member of the opposite gender allows us to discover dimensions of our humanity that we would not otherwise discover.

Every constitution of the family is worthwhile, whether as single persons, married without children, single with children, and married with children. However, children best develop their identity in relationship to both the same sex parent and the opposite sex parent. These early relationships are important for the development of healthy adults. Male and female share in common their humanity, both having equal worth in the eyes of God. One gender is not superior to another. Each individual is an incomplete fragment, for human beings are social creatures. We achieve human wholeness through meaningful relationships with others. Men and women become whole as they learn to give honor and respect to each other.

In our free society, each individual has the freedom to love and to seek love with people of their choice. The free and full consent of both parties in the marriage is

important. Therefore, government ought not to construct barriers to marriage due to race, nationality, or religion. Such barriers ought not to exist regarding the dissolution of the marriage. The family is such a basic unit of society that it deserves protection by the government.

Gender diversity is a gift from God, intended to add to the rich variety of human experience and perspective.

Sexuality is God's good gift to all persons. People affirm that gift when we publicly commitment ourselves to each other. All persons ought to discipline themselves in their stewardship of this gift. Even thought sexuality is intimate and personal, we have limited understanding of this complex gift. The medical, theological, and social science disciplines ought to combine in a determined effort to understand human sexuality more completely. Churches could even take a leadership role in bringing together these disciplines to address this most complex issue. Further, for the Christian, God challenges us to find responsible, committed, and loving forms of expression of our sexuality.

The Bible and church tradition clearly affirms sexual relations only in the marriage bond. Sex may become exploitative within as well as outside marriage. Churches and all citizens reject all sexual expressions that damage or destroy the humanity God has given us as birthright, and affirm only that sexual expression that enhances that same humanity. Sexual relations where one or both partners are exploitative, abusive, or promiscuous are beyond the parameters of acceptable Christian and acceptable ethical behavior and are ultimately destructive to individuals, families, and the social order.

Churches unite with many other citizens concerned with morality to deplore all forms of the commercialization and exploitation of sex, with their consequent cheapening and degradation of human personality. They call for strict global enforcement of laws prohibiting the sexual exploitation or use of children by adults and encourage efforts to hold perpetrators legally and financially responsible. They call for the establishment of adequate protective services, guidance, and counseling opportunities for children thus abused. They insist that all persons, regardless of age, gender, marital status, or sexual orientation, are entitled to have their human and civil rights ensured.

Churches ought to recognize the continuing need for full, positive, age-appropriate and factual sex education opportunities for children, young people, and adults. The churches and other religious communities offer a unique opportunity to give quality guidance and education in this area.

Homosexual persons no less than heterosexual persons are individuals of sacred worth. All persons need the ministry and guidance of the church in their struggles for human fulfillment, as well as the spiritual and emotional care of a fellowship that enables reconciling relationships with God, with others, and with self. The United Methodist Church does not condone the practice of homosexuality and consider this practice incompatible with Christian teaching. Churches affirm that God's grace is available to all, and we will seek to live together in Christian community. Families and churches ought not to reject or condemn lesbian and gay members and friends. Churches ought to commit ourselves to be in ministry for and with all persons.

Family violence and abuse in all its forms—verbal, psychological, physical, sexual— is detrimental to the covenant of the human community. Churches ought to

provide a safe environment, counsel, and support for the victim. While churches deplore the actions of the abuser, we affirm that person to be in need of God's redeeming love.

One abuse of the good gift of sexuality is sexual harassment. Sexual harassment as any unwanted sexual comment, advance or demand, either verbal or physical, that the recipient reasonably perceives as demeaning, intimidating, or coercive. Sexual harassment is exploitation of a power relationship as well as a sexual issue. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the creation of a hostile or abusive working environment resulting from discrimination based on gender. Sexual harassment creates improper, coercive, and abusive conditions wherever it occurs in society. Sexual harassment undermines the social goal of equal opportunity and the climate of mutual respect between men and women. Unwanted sexual attention is wrong and discriminatory. Sexual harassment interferes with the moral mission of the Church.

Concerning abortion, the beginning of life and the ending of life are the God-given boundaries of human existence. While individuals have always had some degree of control over when they would die, they now have the awesome power to determine when and even whether new individuals will be born. Unborn human life is sacred. The life and well-being of the mother is also sacred. Tragic conflicts of life with life may justify abortion. In such cases, the church ought to support the legal option of abortion under proper medical procedures. Abortion for the purpose of birth control or gender selection is unacceptable. Late-term abortion is also unacceptable. Christians and others concerned with the moral quality of their actions must prayerfully discern the proper conditions that warrant abortion. The churches need to minister to those who choose to terminate pregnancy. However, churches and society ought to place the option of adoption

consistently before anyone considering abortion. The legality of abortion does not determine the moral issues involved in abortion.

Children are a gift from God to be welcomed and received. Churches recognize that some circumstances of birth make the rearing of a child difficult. They ought to affirm and support the birth parent(s) whose choice it is to allow the child to be adopted. All persons ought to recognize the agony, strength, and courage of the birth parent(s) who choose(s) in hope, love, and prayer to offer the child for adoption. In addition, all persons ought to recognize the anxiety, strength, and courage of those who choose in hope, love, and prayer to be able to care for a child. All persons ought to affirm and support the adoptive parent(s)' desire to rear an adopted child as they would a biological child. When circumstances warrant adoption, people ought to follow proper legal procedures. When appropriate and possible, people ought to encourage open adoption so that a child may know all information and people related to them, both medically and relationally. People ought to support and encourage greater awareness and education to promote adoption of a wide variety of children through foster care, international adoption, and domestic adoption. In particular, churches ought to commend the birth parent(s), the receiving parent(s), and the child to the care of the churches, that they may share grief, celebrate their joy, and nurture the child in a community of Christian love.

Concerning care for the dying, every mortal life will ultimately end in death. Death is never a sign that God has abandoned us, no matter what the circumstances of the death might be. As Christians, we must always be prepared to surrender the gift of mortal life and claim the gift of eternal life through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Care for dying persons is part of our stewardship of the divine gift of life when cure is no

longer possible. We encourage the use of medical technologies to provide palliative care at the end of life when life-sustaining treatments no longer support the goals of life, and when they have reached their limits. There is no moral or religious obligation to use these when they impose undue burdens or only extend the process of dying. Dying persons and their families are free to discontinue treatments when they cease to be of benefit to the patient. Even when one accepts the inevitability of death, the church and society must continue to provide faithful care, including pain relief, companionship, support, and spiritual nurture for the dying person in the hard work of preparing for death. We encourage and support the concept of hospice care whenever possible at the end of life.

Concerning suicide, a human life ought not to end in this way. Suicide is often the result of depression, pain, and suffering. Such persons need access to proper pastoral and medical care. As Romans 8:38-39 reminds us, nothing separates us from the love of God. Condemnation of the person who successfully completes suicide or a stigma upon the family of such a person is hardly appropriate. The churches ought to oppose assisted suicide and euthanasia.

Second, in order to ensure domestic tranquility, government and citizens will need to face honestly the bonds of respect and tolerance that a free society needs in order to remain free. Since God has created each person, each person has the right to life, the right to choose freely the course their lives will take, and the right to pursue their view of what makes for a reasonably happy human life. The baby-boom generation, in particular, has encouraged society to reflect upon the need for respect and toleration in social relationships. A society that values liberty requires its citizens to respect diverse expressions of that liberty by individuals and social groups. The intellectual basis for this

respect is the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, the Bill of Rights, the French Declaration of the Rights of Man, the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the European Convention on Human Rights. At its basic level, every person ought to have equal access to the social benefits offered by society: housing, education, communication, employment, medical care, the law, and protection of their person and property.

Here are some individual recommendations to make such respect and toleration actual in American society.

Hatred or violence against any group of persons is a failure to show respect to those whom God has made.

Personal racism is degrading attitudes towards groups of person solely because they are part of that group.

Institutional racism favors one group of persons over another, solely because of membership in that group.

Religious toleration is important for political authorities to show to each religion and for religious people to show to each other. Such toleration does not extend, however, to religious groups that justify violence against America. Such toleration does not extend to religious practices that abuse children or women.

Part of honoring what God has made shows itself in respect offered to the diversity of ethnic groups within society. In addition, such appreciation must lead to an appreciation to the deeper unity we have as human beings made in the image of God. Persecution of racial groups is a failure to respect the ways God may be at work.

Adults owe to children proper education, food, clothing, shelter, health care, and emotional well-being. Children deserve protection from exploitation, physical violence, and sexual abuse.

Society owes respect to its young adults.

Society owes the aging respect, showing itself in proper retirement and health programs.

Society owes respect to women, showing itself in equal opportunity and access to jobs and other decision-making opportunities.

Society owes the disabled, often the weakest, respect as children of God and the gifts they offer to church and community.

Society owes respect to those of same gender orientation.

Proper means of control of population increases will enhance the quality of human life.

Abuse of alcohol and other drugs destroys the fabric of society.

Abuse of tobacco harms personal and public health.

Any medical experimentation on human beings requires their full, rational, and uncoerced consent.

Genetic technology can enhance the quality of human life. Yet, we must be careful in how we apply this technology to cloning and germ-line therapy in the sperm, egg, or early fertilization.

Respect for all life on the farm whether with the resident family farm or the factory farm, is an important part of the respect society owes to those who grow the food

necessary for sustaining human life. All farming needs to carry out its work with the health of the totality of the ecosystem in mind.

The development of urban and suburban life needs to have in mind the quality of the human lives involved.

Churches and all those engaged in moral reflection have the social responsibility of encouraging the entertainment industry to promote values that enhance human life, rather than degrade it through its depiction of permissive lifestyles and violence. Parents need to monitor the use of entertainment, including the Internet, by their children.

Churches and society need to value those who live with HIV and AIDS. They need to educate people to avoid its spread.

Health care is not a right. The education of citizens regarding health styles of life will enhance the way in which citizens participate in society. Christianity itself emphasizes that the body is the temple of Holy Spirit. As such, human beings are to respect their bodies. Society itself, in extending respect to individuals, must also respect their bodies. Any health care reform proposal must allow all Americans to choose their own doctor, hospital, and health plan. Health Savings Accounts are the only health plan that allows free choice of doctors and hospitals while providing incentives to reduce health care spending. Small employers should be allowed to join together across state lines and have the same flexibility that large employers enjoy. American families should be allowed to buy health insurance that meets their health care needs and should be allowed to buy insurance from other states. Thirty-three states have high-risk pools that provide health insurance to people who are sick and cannot get health insurance. This

population represents a small portion of the country, but they should not be left out of America's health care system because they are sick.

Government and citizens ought to encourage people to donate their organs of their bodies for the enhancement of the lives of others.

To provide for the common defense

"Provide for the common defense" refers to maintaining a military sufficient to defend the country from external aggression.

Toward the end of the 1982 movie *Gandhi,* an American journalist observes to another longtime American follower of the aging Gandhi, "There is a sadness about him." "He thinks he has failed." "Why? If anything has proved him right, it is the last few months." "I may be blinded by my love for him, but I believe when we most needed it, he offered the world a way out of madness. But he doesn't see it. Neither does the world." The scene ends with his assassination. The movie ends with a burial scene in which some words of wisdom come from Gandhi. "When I despair, I remember that history all through history the way of truth and love has always won. There have been tyrants and murderers and for a time they can seem invincible, but in the end, they always fall. Think of it. Always."

I bring up this scene to show wrong Gandhi was. Yes, he did show the world a better way. However, even India did now follow him. He wanted the British to leave, and they did. Yet, his vision of a Hindu and Muslim India failed. They chose not to live together in peace. The circumstances of his death showed the victory of murderers over the nonviolent. The philosopher Hegel referred to "the slaughter-bench of human history," a far more realistic portrayal of what human history teaches us. Those who

demonstrate greater force will determine the course of human history. The violence that people willingly perpetrate upon each other determines the nature of human relationships. Such a statement is true on the larger canvass of human history. The physical, brute strength of a people will determine the course of world history. In fact, Gandhi reveals the problem with pious people acting upon the world stage. Such persons have a devotional and contemplative approach to the world. Such persons see the possibilities and dreams. Sadly, they miss the reality of violence in their midst. They do not see properly the need for good people to defend themselves against aggressors.

My suggestion here is that liberal and democratic societies are good societies, recognizing that as human goods, they are always imperfect. Such societies are relatively new on the stage of world history. They are still a minority. Many tyrants, secular and religious, want them destroyed. In for such a good society to exist, it will require military strength, for such strength on the world stage is what will determine the course of history.

In the context of the above statements, I hope I have prepared the reader for the following statement: America deserves to have the strongest military in the world.

The emergence of American power is a unique reality in world history. The fact that America does not impose its will or form of government upon other lands and does not seek an empire throughout the world is a unique fact of history. It shows the American character, oriented as it is toward what is best for others – their freedom – as well as what is best for itself. American policy recognizes the benefit global freedom and peace is to itself, and therefore desires it to reside in the institutions of others. The generosity of Americans in charitable giving and in government giving throughout the world testifies to the generosity of the American people. The fact that people from all

over the world want to be here, whether legally or illegally, suggests that America has qualities other people want. The American internal debate between the Left and Right should begin on the common ground of the greatness of the American achievement in the world.

I realize that many people in the world and in America have discomfort over the power of the United States at this time in history. At present, a world with justice, freedom, and dignity depends upon America taking an active political, economic, and military role in the world. Without such involvement, the world will plunge into a new form of Dark Ages. The role of America as defender of democracy has shifted. When democracy had a clear enemy, such as the Soviet Union and Communism, the rules were clear. The tight structure that once governed the world no longer exists. That situation has changed. The world is going through a time of international deregulation. We are not sure where that process will end up. We live in a unipolar world with the US and its economic and political power at the center. I am going to write something with which many of you will disagree. However, I think this is a positive change for the world. The threat of nuclear destruction has lessened. I will make the statement that America does not desire an empire, recognizing that many people concerned with the power America has simply will not believe it. America must not use its power to impose democratic institutions anywhere. America does desire that the values of economic and political freedom become the property of all nations. America must discern when real threats to its freedoms face it, and then use its military force for the moral purpose of defending freedom and human rights.

It is my judgment that America can use its power in the world for increased peace and justice. This requires a passion and a vision for the possible world in which future generations will live.

Is it possible to have a world in which political institutions provide the political and economic freedoms necessary for them to pursue their vision of the best possible human life for them? Is it possible to have a world within which nations resolve their disputes through rational discussion, rather than resort to violence? Is it possible the wise and moral use of force as a last resort will actually help the world get to an increasingly just and peaceful place? Is it possible that religion, rather than being a source of so much harm in the world, can learn to make positive contributions to the best individual human life and our best life together?

Many Americans have forgotten how fragile freedom and human rights are in the flow of human history. Over the past 50 years, ordinary citizens on every continent are embracing the belief that individuals have a claim to basic rights and dignities. Freedom of speech and assembly, freedom from slavery, torture and arbitrary arrest, and the right to equality under the law as common values are still quite new in many parts of the world. Leaders who violate these principles now face international exposure and sanction.

I want to spend some time reflecting with you on some facets of history in the 20th century in which I think the United States used its military power toward a moral purpose. The most riveting story of the 20th century was the defeat of totalitarianism and Communism at the hands of America. In February 1941, Henry Luce, in his famous "American Century" editorial in Life, called on Americans to "accept wholeheartedly our

duty and our opportunity as the most powerful and vital nation in the world . . . to exert upon the world the full import of our interests."

We do not want the future to know this period to as the inter-Cold War period. That would be a failure of American policy. We have to be careful how we use our economic and military advantage. We need to continue being the only superpower in the world. It is best for us. It is best for the world. We want to build institutions, economically, politically, and militarily, that will bring about and sustain a world without the proliferation of weapons, open trade, and the reduction of violence to deal with differences. We need to use our position to persuade others about the wisdom of this approach. We need to find the courage and confidence to play this kind of role in the world.

From Revolution to Cold War

Compare the achievement of the US to that of France, since we had our revolutions at about the same time. The American Revolution gave America Madison, Washington, and Jefferson, not Robespierre. The American crisis of the mid 1800's gave us Lincoln, not Napoleon III.

Frankly, the wise use of American power has brought a safer world into being. Does war ever solve anything? The answer, if we pay attention to history, is that it can, when used wisely and with moral purpose. The American legacy is impressive. No one could have predicted it at the beginning of the 20th century. A hundred years ago, America was the largest of the great powers. Its economy had surged ahead of those in Europe. For all of America's sweep and swagger, however, Britain was the dominant world power, with the largest empire and Navy, rivaled only by Germany, with its huge

Army and strength in science. America, for many reasons, was unwilling and unready to inherit the mantle of leadership. The United States was united in name only, the wounds of the Civil War still far from healed. Though wages in the North were twice those in the South, few Southerners deigned to cross the Mason-Dixon Line. On both sides of the divide, racial segregation was the order of the day. On the borders, meanwhile, immigrants were pouring in-17 million between 1890 and 1914. The new arrivals gave cold comfort to America's elites. The Poles, Jews, Italians, they feared, could not possibly become true Americans. We involved ourselves in a senseless war with Spain. We fought about Prohibition and the Skopes trial. We had a great depression. Pearl Harbor left us with questions about the future. Business and labor have had rocky relationships throughout the century. We had to respond to the Cold War, as defined by Churchill in Missouri in 1946.

Soon, however, the medical and legal professions adopted standard criteria for admittance. Education became a transforming power through public schools and universities. Businesses and labor became large institutions. Theodore Roosevelt declared that the military would make America one of the great nations. During WWI, Wilson nationalized railroads and shipyards. The government censored newspapers. The government jailed war critics. 3 million men went to win the war to end wars. We disagreed about Prohibition. We disagreed about science and religion in the Scopes trial of 1925. Between 1929 and 1933, the economy shrank by one half. We had twenty-five percent unemployment. The wounds of WWI festered. This resulted in Lenin's rise in 1918, Mussolini in 1922, and Hitler in 1933. Yet, in America, in a nation of 130 million people, 90 million went to the movies. Throughout WWII Americans got used to

working productively and creatively in large organizations. Big business, big labor, and big government produced a bounteous economy. They produced the baby boom and the middle class. Church membership grew. Crime fell to record lows. Confidence in major institutions grew.

Did the United States properly assert its power during the Cold War? In March 1946, Winston Churchill went to Fulton, MO. He said that because of Joseph Stalin, "an iron curtain" had fallen across Eastern Europe. The Truman Doctrine promised to protect all "free peoples of the world." The Marshall Plan provided vast economic aid to Europe. NATO was America's first peacetime military alliance, signed in April 1949. In June 1950, Truman sent troops to Korea to stop Communist invasion. We paid for the Cold War with high taxes for defense and foreign aid, a military draft, air-raid drills, and listening to Soviet threats of nuclear war over Berlin and Cuba. Aids to Kennedy and Johnson devised a military strategy in Vietnam that was not capable of working. Many affluent Americans did not find it important enough for which to draft their sons. McNamara's draft system allowed college students to avoid service. The elite on college campuses produced a generation of academics and professionals who regarded the US and the Communist states as morally equivalent. By 1968, many of the planners and supporters of the war saw it as deeply immoral. They no longer believed that this country was uniquely strong and uniquely good.

America defeated totalitarianism in both its right-wing colonial and Nazi versions, and its left-wing Communist version. Only a society with enormous confidence in its achievements and in its future could have mustered the dedication and resources to strive

for a world order in which defeated enemies would be conciliated, stricken allies restored, and adversaries converted.

I know many of you will disagree with this assessment, but Reagan embodied a renewal of confidence in America. The peacetime expansions of the 1980's and 1990's produced 40 million new jobs. The economies of Europe and Asia produced almost none. Reagan increased defense spending, sent troops to Grenada, and supported anti-Communist forces in Central America and Afghanistan. In 1983, he asked for military aid to the government in El Salvador to fight communist guerrillas. Sen. Dodd called the Reagan policy "folly, pure and simple," trying to win a war that could not be won. We were going against the tide of history. Yet, Soviet leaders became convinced that they could not compete with the economic and technological innovation of the US. Reagan insisted, contrary to much of the academic community and the political Left, on proclaiming the superiority of the American system. In London in 1983, he predicted the fall of the Soviet Union. In 1987, while in Berlin, he demanded, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall." By October 1989, the wall was history. The Soviet empire soon followed into the dustbin of human history.

Many Americans seem to have forgotten how evil Communism truly is. How else can we explain the desire to have Elian, the six-year-old Cuba boy, returned to Castro in 2000? To send him back to communist Cuba was the ultimate in the abuse of a child. In the midst of all the discussion, we have lost any conception that America has a role of moral leadership to play, and that this has been an excellent opportunity to play it. How one longed for someone in our public life to stand up and say those things that Clinton could never say, because he is not even capable of thinking such thoughts. Many

Americans longed to hear that this nation loves liberty. We long to hear that this nation detests Communism. That we will, on every possible occasion, strive to vex and humiliate Communist dictators and all others who boast themselves our enemies, to frustrate their designs, to diminish them in the eyes of their own people, to hasten their downfall by any means our laws and ethics permit. The Soviet dissident Vladimir Bukovsky once suggested that people should evaluate any Western policy towards Communists by the following test: What does it look like to the men and women in the camps? In Castro's camps, they wept.

Brian Crozier has written a book that has painstakingly chronicled the involvement of the Soviet Union in the Cold War. One achievement of this book is that it should lie to rest the claim by too many on the Political Left of today and many in academia that the West started the Cold War. In fact, what both Mr. Crozier and the once-secret Soviet archives show clearly is that the Cold War began the day V.I. Lenin seized power and then created what the author calls Lenin's "expansionist machine." The "laws" of Marxism-Leninism predicted the defeat of capitalism by the world proletariat. Therefore, by perverted Bolshevik logic, all the Soviet Union was doing in seeking world domination was expediting the fulfillment of the "laws" of history. Nikita Khrushchev, when he told Adlai Stevenson "We will bury you," put crisply what Lenin had written soon after the Bolshevik Revolution:

> "We live not only in a State but in a system of States and the existence of the Soviet Republic besides the imperialist states during a lengthy period of time is inconceivable. In the very end either one or the other will win. And before this result, a series of horrible conflicts between the Soviet Republic and the bourgeois states is unavoidable."

Many Americans have forgotten that, in the late 1940's, Stalin and Kim Il Sung plotted aggression against South Korea. I. F. Stone claimed that the US military industrial complex started the conflict and used villainous methods to wage it.

Stalin gave a speech on Aug 19, 1939 to the Party Central Committee. Few scholars knew about this speech until its recent publication. These in his own cold-blooded words are the points Stalin made to justify the 1939 Nazi-Soviet Pact that unleashed World War II:

> 1. In peacetime, the communist movement in Europe cannot seize power. Or, as he put it, "The dictatorship of a Communist Party may be envisaged as a result of a great war."
> 2. "It is in the interests of the USSR . . . that war should break out between the Reich and the Franco-British capitalist bloc . . . and the war should last as long as possible with the aim of weakening both sides."
> 3. "We shall maintain a position of neutrality, while biding our time."
> 4. "We have before us a vast field of action to develop the world Revolution."

He stated that, in peacetime, the communist movement in Europe could seize power. The victory of the Communist Party could not come without a great war in Europe. It was in the interests of the Soviet Union, therefore, that a war breaks out between Germany on the one hand, and Britain and France on the other. They will be neutral in the way, waiting for the right opportunity. What Stalin could not believe was that the Nazis would ever violate the non-aggression pact and attack Russia, which they did in June 1941. Stalin's towering miscalculation, a tribute to the unrestrained arrogance of this murderous dictator, cost the lives of 20 million Russians in the war.

There was not an alert soul on the other side of the Berlin Wall who had any doubts about the evil of the Soviet empire. Heroic dissidents like Natan Sharansky and Vaclav Havel and Lech Walesa recognized its evil. Everyone there knew it. The entire

empire had a cynicism reaching all the way to the top about its irredeemable corruption, oppressiveness and bankruptcy. It was on our side that people had trouble understanding the thoroughness of the Soviet evil.

America never had a Cold War consensus. We debated about involvement in "entangling alliances." We divided about the nature, aims, and likely evolution of the Soviet Union. By the late 1960's many in the Democrat Party believed the Soviet spending on the military was a reaction to what America spent. Cyrus Vance, Carter's secretary of state, said that Leonid Brezhnev "shares our dreams and aspirations." We divided around the use of forces in Korea, Vietnam, and Grenada. We divided over nuclear deterrence through the nuclear freeze movement. We divided about ballistic missiles. We divided about anticommunist insurgencies. The term "cold warrior" meant fanatic and small-minded. We had a tough time viewing the Soviet Union as evil. Anthony Lewis called Reagan's view primitive. Tom Wicker called it smug. George Ball referred with contempt to Reagan's "obsessive detestation of what you call 'the evil empire.' We did not sing from the same songbook. The tide of history was with freedom backed by American power. We are the tide of history.

I am going to say something now with which many of my fellow citizens would disagree. The Cold War is over, thanks to the vision of Ronald Reagan and the naming of the Soviet Union as an evil empire. I realize that many citizens appear to have a visceral hatred of this cowboy and actor. I confess that I do not understand the reaction, at least when it comes to the liberation of Eastern Europe and other states from the Soviet empire. These nations have their struggles in economics and politics. Yet, the stories that have come out of that communist dominated society, as well as the stories out of Eastern

Europe, remind us of how genuinely evil that system was. In being as evil as it was, it fulfilled the nature and purpose of the system. When communism realized its ideal of destroying individual rights and seeking to achieve a utopia through changing individuals into some kind of idealized image of what human beings should be, it demonstrated the extent of its evil. It was not just a corruption of that political state or mistakes by leaders. It was a full-fledged realization of the goals and ideals of the Soviet system that led to the death of millions of people and the denial of the worth and dignity of individuals.

The Berlin Wall fell on Nov. 9, 1989. All Americans ought to celebrate this, as it marked the end of a century of totalitarianism and communism. It marked the end of Marxism and socialism that existed for 150 years. Yet, many do not believe this was our finest hour. Clearly, I believe the destruction of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Empire was among the greatest moral victories (not just an American one) that history has seen.

Noam Chomsky, an intellectual leader of the political left, would consider the model of evaluating the Cold War I have offered as based upon an ideological construct. He prefers to evaluate the Cold War as the continuation of European expansion and colonial power exerted over the poor countries of the world. The Cold War was simply about who would rule, Moscow or Washington. Both sides committed atrocities. Moscow did so through its tanks in East Berlin, Budapest, Prague, and Afghanistan. Domestically, the Cold War allowed the military and bureaucratic elite installed in the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 to entrench itself in Russia and its colonial conquests. To put it succinctly, the Cold War allowed Moscow to conduct a war against its satellite nations. Washington did so through protecting corporate interests in the world and through military suppression of forms of government unfriendly to American economic interests.

United States leaders of both political parties exaggerated the security concerns to the United States in order to continue American corporate presence throughout the world. America had no genuine interest in diplomacy, a process that masked the determination for American military and economic expansion. Domestically, the Cold War allowed the military and corporate interests to gain dominance in government and society. To put it succinctly, the Cold War allowed the United States to conduct a war against the Third World.

Of course, if Chomsky is right, it did matter who won the Cold War in terms of the improvement of human life on the planet. After all, the Cold War had nothing to do with freedom and democracy, both of which the United States thwarted when it was in its best interest to do so. Therefore, the Cold War was only about who would exert oppressive power, and not about defeating barbarians and totalitarians.

Enemy: The Continuing Challenge of Communism

I would like to deal with the remaining challenge that liberal democracies face in communism. Many Americans have forgotten the designs of Communist China, which has also stated that America is its primary foe. China is the only nation, in the near future, that can be a threat to the US. It has the population, the potential wealth, and the ambition to do so. China seems to have two minds. One wants to engage in trade and expand their market at home. The other wants to keep the desire for freedom from going too far. However, as long as the nation remains communist, Americans need not delude themselves into what its designs are for the United States. As with the Soviet Union, communist China will need to fall, and with any good fortune for the Chinese people and for the American people, it will happen just as peacefully.

Enemy: Muslim Fundamentalism

My fear is that some people within American do not understand the threat America faces. Many in the media, many in the ACLU, many in political life, have taken steps toward suicide. They have aligned themselves with those who would destroy this country. Their belief in America as an oppressive force in the world, combined with the belief in multi-culturalism, has blinded them to a genuine enemy America faces. The rise of Muslim fundamentalism has generated another formidable opposition to the respect of the rights, worth, and dignity of individuals. As an ideological movement, it has similarity to fascism and Communism. Everything that the West fought for in the Enlightenment period, these people stand against. Long ago, the Middle East and Islam rejected any attempt to move toward Enlightenment. Today, they consider themselves purists in favor of the Islamic triumph over the world. The only morally wrong act is to reject the revolution. They revolution for which they long is Muslims all over the world to join them in an attack upon the West. The guilt of the world rests upon those who do not join their revolution. It will be up to the United States to accept its leadership in the world on behalf of liberty to deal with this challenge. Americans will need to fight for their own future, as well as the future of others.

I would suggest a few principles.

First, the military has crippled the original group around Bin Laden. Given the history of this group, the military has already defended America and Europe from what would have been far more attacks.

Second, if the experience of Europe is any indication, the United States will need to develop new legal procedures to deal with Islamic fundamentalist terrorism. Europe has many avenues open to surveillance and detaining suspected terrorists that America

does not have. The military has already killed many terrorist leaders as part of their war. However, it will not kill all of them. Europe has made legal adjustments with the same difficulty that the USA has had. Groups concerning with individual liberty are always nervous about granting to the police and government such powers. At the same time, some trust in our elected representative is important. One might even use the criminal procedures against organized crime as a pattern for dealing with terrorist networks. The advantage of this procedure is that, once in the legal system, the possibility for people to give up important information for the purpose of self-preservation is important.

Third, countries are already using procedures to dry up the money pipeline for these groups.

It is difficult to imagine an end to this war. However, in light of a passion for the possible, I want to suggest that it can. Long-term, the Bush administration is right to have a policy of democratization among the Arab countries. It will require changes within Islam that Christians and Jews cannot impose. It will require Arab governments who will have the courage to oppose their fundamentalist clerics in their attempts to educate, through television, the hatred of Jews and the USA.

I propose the possibility, recognizing the despair with which many people face this battle. When people willingly become homicide bombers, the possibility of defense appears remote. However, I recognize that the possibility for change is present, and that the change needs to occur within the Arab world and within Islam. Islam will need to have secular leaders strong enough to teach it that it can peacefully persuade people to its religion without desiring to impose Islamic law upon the culture, just as Christianity in Europe needed secular leaders to teach it this truth. It will take time and patience to

accomplish this, for the masses of Muslims in the world is closer to fundamentalism than they are to a "moderate" brand of Islam. Further, the religious texts of Islam do not lend themselves well to humanism and liberal democracy. Yet, Islam needs to learn the first rule of religion: do no harm. The masses need to learn that others in the world disagree with their religious beliefs, that it is all right for them to do so, and that intimidating people to silence their disagreement is not a good or godly thing to do. It needs to learn that it can make a positive contribution to the best human life without resorting to worldly force and dominance of a culture. It needs to learn to live with the ambiguities the liberty and respect for the worth and dignity of each individual bring.

One of the major issues facing liberal democracies is the production, modernization, and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. However, the problem is not so much their proliferation, though I agree that the fewer in the world the better. The problem is the kind of people who have them. If communist dictators and military dictators, or Islamic fundamentalists, possess such weapons, we have cause for concern. Nations that respect the worth and dignity of individuals may have them and still we do not fear their use to gain advantage. The way to peace is not the removal of weapons, for having once gained such knowledge, we cannot go back to ignorance. Rather, the spread of liberal democracy will place peaceful, tolerant, and pluralistic leaders in charge of those countries.

Religion is doing harm is in the Middle East, and in particular with the Jewish, Islam, and Christian conflict. Jews feel oppressed by their neighbors, and are suspicious of the European community. Palestinians cannot have the rights of full citizenship in Israel, for Jews justly look upon them with suspicion. Palestinians experience oppression

by the Jewish state. Yet, we who live so far away must examine the relationship between Palestinians and Jews in the larger context of the Middle East. The Islamic world in the Middle East perpetuates an anti-Jewish sentiment among their people that would make Hitler proud. The Palestinian Liberation Organization and many Islamic countries call for the destruction of the state of Israel. Those who live in liberal democracies need to look honestly at how all too many Arab governments treat their citizens, whether in Iraq, Iran, Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Saudi Arabia, or the PLO. If Jews in Israel are paranoid, it is for good reason. If such countries cannot treat their citizens as bearers of individual rights and as persons of worth and dignity, how can we possibly hope that they would treat the Jewish people or the American people with worth and dignity? Their own Moslem brothers further oppress Palestinians and sisters in that they are rich in oil money, yet those funds do not flow to the Palestinians in order to relieve their plight.

Many American liberals have begun to analyze the situation in the Middle East from a Marxist critique that Israel is oppressor and Palestinians are the oppressed. To make this analysis is to decide beforehand the outcome of any discussion and to make reconciliation impossible. A Marxist critique can end only in alienation and the perceived moral superiority of one cause over another. The failure to see that both Palestinians and Jews are the recipients of oppression is to fail to enter into the moral ambiguities that exist in the region. The failure to see that the governments who rule Arabs oppress their citizens ought to suggest the value of negotiated agreements with them. It also ought to suggest what they would do to the Jewish people in Israel if given the opportunity.

Given these realities, it will take great courage from secular rulers to teach religion in the Middle East to have a different role than it does now. Religion does not

have the capacity within itself to adopt a humble role in society. It will require secular leaders with great courage to teach religion its proper place in political life. As an aside, the same is true in economics, for religion typically cares more for eternity than it does for this moment in time. Religion does not have the tools to improve the material conditions of people; that can only come from good economics, science, and technology. In any case, it will take a leader of the PLO who will take strong action against groups like the Islamic Jihad. It will take a Jewish leader who will keep Orthodox Judaism in its place. Whether such strength can arise in the present situation is questionable, for it will mean taking a strong stand against many of one's own people. Although many Americans seem to think that the United States has a role here, I am not convinced. If the people who share this geographical territory do not want peace, I do not see how the United States can impose it. Given the current hatred of the United States among many Arabs, American troops in the region would not be something I want to see.

These matters raise question about the relationship between Jews, Muslims, and Christians in America.

The Muslims with whom I have spoken do not understand what they consider to be the pro-Israeli policy of the United States in the Middle East. To you, I hope what I have said so far has helped explain why American policy is the way it is. You may not want to hear it, but you need to listen: the Arab governments need to become respectful of the worth, dignity, and rights of their own people. Islam needs to accept a role as a sub-culture within the Arab world. I hope you, as American Muslims, can help Islam get to that place in its history, and I hope you can do what you can steer Arab governments

toward honoring liberty. I hope you will do so out of genuine compassion for your brothers and sisters.

Further, the Muslims with whom I have spoken have a legitimate concern about how America will treat them during this difficult time. I remind you that the government has required Muslims who have legally entered this country to register themselves and their families. If you have done nothing wrong, you have nothing to fear. Frankly, I hope that every visa that the government has granted will require some kind of continual renewal and registration. We live in a dangerous world. The genuine immigrants to this country do so because they value liberty and desire the best for themselves and their families. However, too many people, and too many are Muslim, want to destroy the liberties that you enjoy. You do not desire Islamic imposed in this culture or in any other country. I recognize that. However, I hope that you can cooperate with the government in this matter, and help your adopted country to defend itself against an enemy that may be within your communities.

I said at the beginning that I wanted to be personal, and here is a topic on which I want to be quite clear. Among my many concerns is the renewal of anti-Judaism in Europe and in the United States. I hear it the way in which people use the word "Jew." I notice it in the Nazi type of propaganda in the Arab world about Jews. I notice it the European opposition to American support of Israel that has a strong anti-Jewish tinge to its argument. Our memories are so short. The atrocities committed against Jewish people in "Christian" Europe are open for all to read about and, I hope, lament. The anti-Judaism within the United States is still a matter of concern. We have forgotten the lessons of the

Holocaust already. From this writer's perspective, Christians "owe" the Jewish people in a large way. Christians are not close to paying that debt.

Now, related to the matter of the subtle language of religion, I would like to direct your attention to the subtle language of ethical decisions, reasons, and behavior, within liberal democracies. Ethical reflections have certain pre-conditions for them to take place in our lives. We enter into relationships with others, we develop some level of politeness with them, and we love them, and hate (in weak sense) them. We work and play with others. We learn to set aside some time to reflect upon our lives and the pattern of life we weave through our behavior and thinking. We develop some appreciation for aesthetics in our lives, embellishing life around us beyond what pure utility would require. Through parental instruction and other involvements, we become aware of custom and tradition within the subculture of which we are a part. None of this is ethical reflection in itself, but provides the fertile soil out of which ethical reflection arises. We begin reasoning about these matters, aware that even if we cannot come to the truth in these matters that is sufficient, we need to have good reasons for thinking and behaving the way we do. We recognize the need for us to live truthfully, even as we aware of how imperfect we really are. The desire toward the best plan of life includes some conception of what it means for us to lead the good life, and that desire says something good about us. We learn the need to discipline our feelings through self-control and courage. We learn discipline toward external goods through our involvement in productive work, generosity with the things we possess, being honorable in our dealings with others, and even in simplifying our lives so that we can enjoy the best things in life. We learn to discipline our relationships with others through accepting responsibility for our lives, tolerance toward others, dealing

with others with fairness, speaking and living truthfully, preserving in relationships and work, loyalty to others, practicing appropriate forgiveness, expressing gratitude, practicing gentleness, and having faith. As we reflect upon such matters, we find a meaningful place in the social world in which we live. We develop a rational plan of life that has a healing effect upon our lives and the lives of those around us. We even learn to accept the inevitable experiences of good and bad fortune as part of a human life, dealing with the treasures and barriers that life brings our way. We develop a way of life that, we hope, will be the best *human* life that *we* can lead.

Enemy: Iraq and the War on Terror

Some people in America have decided that America has an enemy that they will work energetically to "take out," and that enemy is George W. Bush. The United Methodist Church, in The Book of Resolutions #339 opposes the military action in Iraq, since it did so without approval from the UN. Other Americans have determined that America, liberal democracy, and "the West," face a genuine threat to its civilization, and that the enemy needs to be "taken out," and that enemy is militant Islam. The deepest possible divide has occurred within the American people and within the Christian community over the identification over the enemy. My belief is simple. The enemy of America is militant Islam. I may disagree with George W. Bush in the way he has fought the war on the militant wing of Islam. However, I agree with him that America must fight and win this war, for itself and for the cause of freedom. The threat is real. As the Hart and Rudman report stated in March of 2001, the greatest threat to the USA is weapon of mass destruction killing thousands, even millions, within the next twenty-five years. Our

enemies are militant Islam and the military dictators that support them. They use the illegal drug traffic to gain the funds necessary to carry out their war.

Osama bin Laden secured a *fativa* from Shaykh Nasir bin Hamd al-Fahd, a Saudi cleric, in May 2003. In part, it said the following.

> Anyone who considers America's aggressions against Muslims and their lands during the past decades will conclude that striking her is permissible on the basis of the rule of treating one as one has been treated. No other argument need be mentioned. Some brothers have totaled the number of Muslims killed directly or indirectly by their weapons and come up with a figure of nearly ten million. … If a bomb that killed ten million of them and burned as much of their land as they have burned Muslim land was dropped on them, it would be need other arguments if we wanted to annihilate more than this number of them.

Ayman Al-Zwahir made the following statement.

> We have not reached parity with them. We have the right to kill four million Americans – two million of them children – and to exile twice as many and wound and cripple hundreds of thousands. Furthermore, it is our right to fight them with chemical and biological weapons, so as to afflict them with the fatal maladies that have afflicted the Muslims because of the [Americans'] chemical and biological weapons.

Hamas leader Abdel Aziz Rantisi said in June 2003, "Not a single Jew will remain in Palestine."

On the matter of the war that militant Islam has declared on the West, the *9/11 Commission Report* also made the same conclusion I am making.

> Bin Laden and Islamist terrorists mean exactly what they say: To them America is the font of all evil, the "head of the snake, and it must be converted or destroyed."

On a personal level, suppose someone says to you, "I want to kill you. Someday, in some way, I will kill you." Suppose your response is to discover why, and the reason is something you cannot change. You then start negotiating. "Suppose I let you take my arm." This person says, "All right, I will take your arm (chop, chop) … I will also

someday, in some way, kill you." The Islamic militant has deep envy over what liberal democracy, free enterprise, religious tolerance, intellectual freedom, freedom of people to assemble with whom they choose, and Christianity, have accomplished in the West. At some level, they see the success of the West, and are angry. Islam militarily defeated Jews and Christians in the Middle East, made it a crime to convert from Islam to Judaism or Christianity, made its own attempt at reformation and enlightenment in the Middle Ages a heresy, rejected scientific advancement, and now see what Islam and Arab culture has made. They are angry that Islam could not bring to the Middle East, even with immense oil reserves, the worldly success it believes it deserves.

The 9/11 Commission Report said that the support Iran offered al-Qaeda dating back to 1991, when operatives from both sides met in Sudan and agreed "to cooperate in providing support for actions carried out primarily against Israel and the United States." The commission suggests that Iran facilitated the transit of al Qaeda members into and out of Afghanistan before 9/11. Some of these persons were future 9/11 hijackers. They admit this may have been a coincidence. They also found no evidence that Iran or Hezbollah were aware of the attack when it came.

Islam is going through dramatic changes. The West needs to do what it can to develop alliances with those factions within Islam that want peaceful and tolerant solutions to differences.

The invasion and liberation of Iraq has led to the deepest possible divide among Americans as well as within the Christian community. Although I have a position on this war that will become clear, I want to share it in a way that those who disagree may at least understand (respect might be too much of a hope) why I think the way I do. We

need to remember many members of the Democrat Party in the Senate voted in favor of this war. We also need to remember that Congress votes every year to fund it. Although the difference between the parties is great in rhetoric, their votes are a different matter.

Further, dissent about wars has been the norm in American history. We tend to think of World War II as the norm. Instead, it was the exception. The Revolutionary War, Mexican War, Civil War, Vietnam War and others all contained amazing levels of rancor among the American public. The criticism among the citizenry of Washington's generalship or Lincoln's presidency during the action was quite amazing. Thus, the dissent over this war is not startling, from a historical perspective.

My belief is that the invasion of Iraq was not wise. George H. W. Bush wisely did not seek an expansion of the 1991 Gulf War. Following are two statements, one by the President, and one by his Secretary of State, Colin Powell, concerning what would have happened had they allowed "mission creep" to occur.

> We should not march into Baghdad … To occupy Iraq would instantly shatter our coalition, turning the whole Arab world against us, and make a broken tyrant into a latter-day Arab hero.
>
> The Gulf War was a limited-objective war. If it had not been, we would be ruling Baghdad today – at unpardonable expense in terms of money, lives lost and ruined regional relationships.

In his second debate with Al Gore in 2000, George W. Bush said:

> First question is what's in the best interests of the United States? What's in the best interests of our people? When it comes to foreign policy what will be my guiding question. Is it in our nation's interests?
>
> I don't think our troops ought to be used for what's called nation-building. I think our troops ought to be used to fight and win are. I think our troops ought to be used to help overthrow the dictator when it's in our best interests.

I like what Condoleezza Rice said in *Foreign Affairs,* Jan-Feb 2000.

> The president must remember that the military is a special instrument. It is lethal, and it is meant to be. It is not a civilian police force. It is not a political referee. And it is most certainly not designed to build a civilian society. Military force is best used to support clear political goals, whether limited, such as expelling Saddam from Kuwait, or comprehensive, such as demanding the unconditional surrender of Japan and Germany during World War II. It is one thing to have a limited political goal and to fight decisively for it; it is quite another to apply military force incrementally, hoping to find a political solution somewhere along the way. A president entering these situations must ask whether decisive force is possible and is likely to be effective and must know how and when to get out. These are difficult criteria to meet, so U.S. intervention in these "humanitarian" crises should be, at best, exceedingly rare.
>
> This does not mean that the United States must ignore humanitarian and civil conflicts around the world. But the military cannot be involved everywhere. Often, these tasks might be better carried out by regional actors, as modeled by the Australian-led intervention in East Timor. The U.S. might be able to lend financial, logistical, and intelligence support. Sometimes tough, competent diplomacy in the beginning can prevent the need for military force later. Using the American armed forces as the world's "911" will degrade capabilities, bog soldiers down in peacekeeping roles, and fuel concern among other great powers that the United States has decided to enforce notions of "limited sovereignty" worldwide in the name of humanitarianism. This overly broad definition of America's national interest is bound to backfire as others arrogate the same authority to themselves. Or we will find ourselves looking to the United Nations to sanction the use of American military power in these cases, implying that we will do so even when our vital interests are involved, which would also be a mistake.

Quite obviously, both Bush and Rice have steered onto another course. I believe that they have taken the advice of certain neo-conservatives who have a Woodrow Wilson view of America in the world. Instead of “making the world safe for democracy”, they have the vision of democratizing the Middle East. Their failure consists in not appreciating the cultural and moral underpinnings required of a democracy.

It was right for the United States to fight the Cold War. I do not believe it was wise to fight in Vietnam. In the same way, the United States must fight Islamic militants with the objective of winning. We fight an evil alliance of Muslim militants and military

dictatorships that could use our technology against us. However, even if Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, it would not have been wise to invade Iraq. The opposition provided by the Democrat Party became so obsessed with their perceived enemy, George W. Bush, that they did not examine a policy that had many flaws. In particular, the idea that America can build an Arab and Muslim country into a democratic country is not realistic. George W. Bush chases a chimera when he envisions democratizing Iraq, and then democracies will follow throughout these Arab and Muslim countries. The religion and the culture do not lend themselves to a culture that respects individual rights, respects equally rights of men and women, invites religious pluralism, accepts the principle of self-government through political debate and elections, and accepts economic freedom. George W. Bush wants to fight a new type of war, based upon small cells with access to billions of dollars and technology, with similar methods that we used to fight earlier wars in WWI, WWII, Korea, and the Cold War. When George W. Bush said that we needed to bring terrorists to justice, even if we have to pursue them in neighborhoods and caves, then we will do so, he stated, unknowingly, the method by which to fight this enemy. They need to have their funds dry up, they need a vigilant America at its airports and seaports, they need a vigilant America tracking its enemy states, and they need special operations military units pursuing them.

The context within which political and religious discourse needs to take place is that of the threat to liberal democracies that radical Muslim fundamentalism presents at this time in history. Americans may disagree over whether Iraq was the proper place to fight terrorism. Americans must understand that the threat from the jihad declared by radical Islam is real. Some Muslim organizations estimate that 10-15 percent of the

Muslim world population supports this jihad, which would mean about 100 million people! The world needs to take it seriously. Muslims, Christians, and Buddhists are its victims, along with the Jewish people. Like Nazis, they begin with their hatred of Jews, but they continue their hatred outward to all liberal democracies. Will jihad by radical Islam become worse than it has been so far? Will what liberal democracies know as civilization survive? These questions are important to keep in our minds as we consider the war on Islamic fundamentalist terrorism on the one hand and the war in Iraq on the other.

What I have suggested thus far is not the mainstream discussion one hears in the papers and news shows. Consequently, I admit that I may be way off base in my reflections. I now turn to some of the issues one popularly hears discussed.

First, I want to reflect upon the matter of whether America ought to have gone to war in Iraq. The rhetoric of the Left is simple: Bush lied; people died. What he lied about was weapons of mass destruction, of course. It continues with conspiracy theories involving the Bush friendship with the House of Saud and the Bush friendship with Big Oil. Such rhetoric feeds the already present animosity toward George Bush and the Republican Party that exists among the Left. I do not have such hostility to feed. I think it far better to approach the motivations of others with a generous read. I am willing to grant that George Bush, Tony Blair, Rumsfield, Rice, Powell, and the members of Congress who voted in favor of this invasion and liberation, did so with a vision of what the believed was an action taken on behalf of the common good and for the common defense. Specifically, they believe Iraq is one important component of the War on Terror. They believe it better to fight terrorists in Iraq rather than in the cities of the USA.

Consequently, I would like to pursue a different course than that of ascribing evil or disingenuous motives to people I do not know.

For me, the debate at this point ought to center upon whether the decision is actually for the common good and common defense of America and of the free world. One can clearly arrive at different answers. I am confident the President would say that the evidence he had suggested that Hussein had WMD's, was willing to use them against the USA, and had the means to do so through the terror network. We must also remember that America itself, under the administrations of Reagan and Bush in the late 1980's, gave Iraq biological materials, including anthrax and botulinum. Hussein used the material to kill 5,000 Kurds in 1988. In the same period, the United States sent computer components and military helicopters to Iraq.[7] Of course, all of this was due to balance of power politics in the region, the United States not wanting Iran to gain control of the area. My point is that, since Bush knew the United States had done all this, it was likely that Iraq still had such weapons, since the United States had given the weapons to him in the first place. The President wanted to act before the threat was imminent as he reflected upon the significance of September 11, 2001 for American policy. The President has said this intelligence was not accurate. However, we ought to grant him the courtesy of reading him generously at this point. I can understand his position, given the information and experience he had at the time. However, surely we can question whether we ought to have stayed focused upon Bin Laden, monitor Iraq, Iran, North Korea, and Syria closely, and only after capturing Bin Laden take the next step. One could also argue that the war on terror is a global problem and needs a global community united against it. One needs to have a long view in this war. Whatever strategy one adopts, it must be sustainable over

[7] Alan Colmes, *Red, White and Liberal,* 2003.

a long period. Unlike WWI, WWII, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the Cold War, one had specific countries that one needed to defeat in order to win. Such is not the case with the war on Islamic fundamentalist terrorism. Although military battles are part of the war, they are not the sum total of such a war. Therefore, one could argue that part of American leadership in the world is to bring other countries the direction it believes liberal democracies need to go. It also means that the Presidential leadership involves persuading significant portions of the opposition party in order to move forward in a united fashion. I am not sure, and no one will know for sure. History will be the judge.

As of 2007, how important is it to capture Bin Laden in the success of the war against Islamic fundamentalist terrorism? Although his death will not mean the end of the war, I confess that whenever I hear of another tape by him, my blood pressure rises. This suggests that somewhere in my psyche, right or wrong, the importance of removing him from this life is important to me. I wonder how many Americans have the same reaction. For me, the question is still open for history to answer: Should we have waited until we captured Bin Laden?

Of course, for some, the fact that we have not yet found WMD's and have not yet found absolute proof a connection with al-Qaeda is enough. Further, these same persons will point to the continuing death and destruction in Baghdad. Such persons want a timetable for withdrawal. The Council of Bishops of the United Methodist Church in 2005 took this position. However, their call for re-building of Iraq through a multi-national effort shows naiveté in the extreme. Who would rebuild Iraq without the security of American troops?

The Charles Duelfer report persuades me that the lack of WMD's was part of a larger plan. Here is how that report forms the story, as summarized by David Brooks, October 9, 2004.

Saddam Hussein saw his life as an unfolding epic narrative, with retreats and advances, but always the same ending. He would go down in history as the glorious Arab leader, as the Saladin of his day. One thousand years from now, schoolchildren would look back and marvel at the life of The Struggler, the great leader whose life was one of incessant strife, but who restored the greatness of the Arab nation. They would look back and see the man who lived by his saying: "We will never lower our heads as long as we live, even if we have to destroy everybody." Charles Duelfer opened his report on Iraqi weapons of mass destruction with those words. For a humiliated people, Saddam would restore pride by any means.

Saddam knew the tools he would need to reshape history and establish his glory: weapons of mass destruction. These weapons had what Duelfer and his team called a "totemic" importance to him. With these weapons, Saddam had defeated the evil Persians. With these weapons, he had crushed his internal opponents. With these weapons, he would deter what he called the "Zionist octopus" in both Israel and America.

However, in the 1990's, the world was arrayed against him to deprive him of these weapons. So Saddam, the clever one, The Struggler, undertook a tactical retreat. He would destroy the weapons while preserving his capacities to make them later. He would foil the inspectors and divide the international community. He would induce it to end the sanctions it had imposed to pen him in. Then, when they lifted the sanctions, he would reconstitute his weapons and emerge greater and mightier than before.

The world lacked what Saddam had: the long perspective. Saddam understood that what others see as a defeat or a setback can really be a glorious victory if it is seen in the context of the longer epic. Saddam worked patiently to undermine the sanctions. He stored the corpses of babies in great piles, and then unveiled them all at once in great processions to illustrate the great humanitarian horrors of the sanctions. Saddam personally made up a list of officials at the U.N., in France, in Russia and elsewhere whom he would bribe. He sent out his oil ministers to curry favor with China, France, Turkey and Russia. He established illicit trading relations with Ukraine, Syria, North Korea and other nations to rebuild his arsenal.

It was all working. He acquired about $11 billion through illicit trading. He used the oil-for-food billions to build palaces. His oil minister was treated as a "rock star," as the report put it, at international events, so thick was the lust to trade with Iraq. France, Russia, China and other nations lobbied to lift sanctions. Saddam was, as the Duelfer report noted, "palpably close" to ending sanctions.

With sanctions weakening and money flowing, he rebuilt his strength. He contacted W.M.D. scientists in Russia, Belarus, Bulgaria and elsewhere, in order to enhance his technical knowledge base. He increased the funds for his nuclear scientists. He increased his military-industrial-complex's budget 40-fold between 1996 and 2002. He increased the number of technical research projects to 3,200 from 40. As Duelfer reports, "Prohibited goods and weapons were being shipped into Iraq with virtually no problem." That is where Duelfer's story ends.

We can argue about what would have been the best way to depose Saddam, but this report makes it clear that this insatiable tyrant needed to be deposed. He was the

menace, and, as the world hesitated, he was winning his struggle. From his perspective, he was on the verge of greatness.

Second, the policy of the American administration is that Iraq will be a democratic and Muslim state in the heart of the Middle East that will then spread freedom to other countries. I have reservations concerning the possibility of working toward freedom with the Arab brand of Islam, where there might be some favorable disposition toward the West. It was one thing to win the war. The long-term issue is rebuilding a nation along the lines of democratic institutions. Having been in Jordan and Israel, I can confidently say that the hatred of Arab toward the Jew, the Arab view that Israel would not exist were it not for the USA, and the suspicion of the Jew toward the Arab, do not suggest a bright prospect in this area. The Arab Muslim believes Islam has the destiny granted by Allah to subdue the world. However, they look at themselves in poverty and the West in prosperity, and find themselves losing ground. American success makes them feel like primitive failures. Some have become thieves and bandits out of their loss of self-esteem. They cut the throats of any opponent, including Muslim opponents. Cutting the throat of someone on an airplane, ramming a plane into a building, televising death by sword, is their idea of creativity. The Islamic faithful consider it honorable to use violence to defend Islam. The Jew and the West are threats against which many faithful Islamic adherents consider their duty to Allah. As with the Nazis, hatred of Jews and policies that lead to another holocaust will lead to the persecution and death of Christians and secular persons throughout the world. Consequently, I have questions about the vision of change in the Middle East that Bush possesses. I can only say that I hope he is right. It took Christianity several decades to move from the dominant position it held in

Medieval Europe and into the bright sunshine of religious tolerance. This did not happen easily, as the fleeing of people from religious persecution and moving to America, the battle with modern science, and the Thirty Years War on the Continent suggest. The Arab brand of Islam is largely a medieval enterprise that has looked down upon the decadence of the West for centuries. At the same time, recognizing the difficulty, if the world is to have peace and justice, it will need Islam to make the same transformation that Christianity did in the 1500's to the 1800's. I do not think such a transformation can take place through external compulsion. Islamic leaders, Islamic women, and the Arab who believes in a secular government, will need to bring such changes to the area. Such people will need to rebuild Islamic countries. The West has not discovered a good way to rebuild an Islamic country along the lines of democracy. Nor do I see the combination of Arab and Muslim equaling democracy anytime soon. After all, when clerics and heads of political parties have militia, democracy cannot happen. When leaders settle disputes by beheading their political and religious opponents, democracy cannot happen. I have become increasingly skeptical of the vision of the Bush Administration for a democratic Iraq that will lead to a wave of democracy in the Middle East. Part of my skepticism is that this requires a long war, and Americans do not like war.

Third, now that we are in Iraq, what do we do? One needs to answer this question in light of what occurred in Vietnam after Americans left. While we hear little about the result of our departure in the press, two million people died. Americans need to consider next steps carefully. In my opinion, Americans have rejected the argument that war in Iraq and war against terror are the same war. One could make the case that Iraq has become a magnet for terrorists. These persons hate Jews and hate the USA for supporting

them. They hate the USA for the freedom it has, a freedom they interpret as moral decadence. One can make the case that the USA needs to deal with terrorists in the Middle East, for if it does not, Europe and the USA will deal with them on their city streets. Consequently, the push to get the troops out quickly would be shortsighted. This opinion would disagree with the United Methodist Council of Bishops resolution in 2005. Now that Iraq is unstable, America needs to help this country become stable. Preferably, Iraq will have a reasonably free society with some respect for the West. If America leaves before the politicians of Iraq are ready, the potential is present for great harm. The demon that left (Hussein) would be worse than the seven demons that re-enter (al-Qaeda or Iran).

Fourth, I want to conclude by saying that winning the War on Terror is important. If we love ourselves, if we love future generations of Americans and people of the world, America needs to win this war. Islamic fundamentalist terrorists believed, based upon their experience, that the West was decadent and weak. It would not defend itself. The reason they thought this was that they have been at war since 1979. Since then, terrorists have conducted 7,581 attacks throughout the world. They do not consider any of these attacks as isolated incidents. Rather, these attacks are part of the defense of Islam and the attack upon western liberal democracies. Here are the key attacks against the USA.

- Iran Embassy Hostages, 1979;
- In April of 1983 a large vehicle packed with high explosives was driven into the US Embassy compound in Beirut. When it explodes, it kills 63 people.
- Then just six short months later a large truck heavily laden down with over 2500 pounds of TNT smashed through the main gate of the US Marine Corps headquarters in Beirut and 241 US servicemen are killed.
- Two months later in December 1983, another truck loaded with explosives is driven into the US Embassy in Kuwait, and America continues her slumber.

- In April 1985 a bomb explodes in a restaurant frequented by US soldiers in Madrid.
- Then in August a Volkswagen loaded with explosives is driven into the main gate of the US Air Force Base at Rhein-Main, 22 are killed.
- Fifty-nine days later a cruise ship, the Achille Lauro is hijacked and we watched as an American in a wheelchair is singled out of the passenger list and executed.
- The terrorists then shift their tactics to bombing civilian airliners when they bomb TWA Flight 840 in April of 1986 that killed 4 and the most tragic bombing, Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland in 1988, killing 259.
- First New York World Trade Center attack 1993;
- Dhahran, Saudi Arabia Khobar Towers Military complex 1996;
- Nairobi, Kenya US Embassy 1998;
- Dar es Salaam, Tanzania US Embassy 1998;
- Aden, Yemen USS Cole 2000;
- New York World Trade Center 2001; Pentagon 2001.
- Bombing of subway system in London in July 2005.
- Bombing in Spain in March 2004.

The West would crumble with the success of a well-planned attack. The result was September 11, 2001, in which they hit the center of economic power (trade towers) and military power (Pentagon), and tried to hit the center of political power (White House). We need to be quite clear about the evil with which we deal. They behead people on television. They hide among the people rather than face armies with courage. They willingly hide behind women and children for protection, assuming the decency of the West will not allow them to act. They take advantage of the democratic process to send a message of fear to the electorate. They use the decency of the American people against them by claiming abuse of prisoners in prisons, even while they kidnap and slaughter civilians and bomb Arabs.

Enemy: Illegal Immigration

I would like to begin with some reminders from Theodore Roosevelt.

We should provide for every immigrant, by day-schools for the young and night-schools for the adult, the chance to learn English; and if after, say, five years he has not learned English, he should be sent back to the land from whence he came. . . . We should demand full performance of duty from them. Every man of them should be required to serve a year with the colors, like our native-born youth, before being allowed to vote. Nothing would do more to make him feel an American among his fellow Americans, on an equality of rights, of duties, and of loyalty to the flag. (New York Times, September 10, 1917.)

Never under any condition should this Nation look at an immigrant as primarily a labor unit. He should always be looked at primarily as a future citizen and the father of other citizens who are to live in this land as fellows with our children and our children's children. Our immigration laws, permanent or temporary, should always be constructed with this fact in view. (December 1, 1917.) Roosevelt in the Kansas City Star, 58.

The immigrant must not be allowed to drift or to be put at the mercy of the exploiter. Our object is not to imitate one of the older racial types, but to maintain a new American type and then to secure loyalty to this type. We cannot secure such loyalty unless we make this a country where men shall feel that they have justice and also where they shall feel that they are required to perform the duties imposed upon them. . . .
We cannot afford to continue to use hundreds of thousands of immigrants merely as industrial assets while they remain social outcasts and menaces any more than fifty years ago we could afford to keep the black man merely as an industrial asset and not as a human being. We cannot afford to build a big industrial plant and herd men and women about it without care for their welfare. We cannot afford to permit squalid overcrowding or the kind of living system which makes impossible the decencies and necessities of life. We cannot afford the low wage rates and the merely seasonal industries which mean the sacrifice of both individual and family life and morals to the industrial machinery. (Before Knights of Columbus, New York City, October 12, 1915.)

The one being abhorrent to the powers above the earth and under them is the hyphenated American—the “German-American,” the “Irish-American," or the "native-American." Be Americans, pure and simple! If you don't act on the theory that every man who in good faith assumes the duties and responsibilities of an American citizen in a spirit of true Americanism is an American, and is to be treated as such, . . . you are yourselves unfit to take part in managing our government and you are bound to make a failure if you try to better the condition of our cities. (Before Liberal Club, Buffalo, N. Y., September 10, 1895.)

I am among those Americans whose ancestors include men and women from many different European countries. The proportion of Americans of this type will steadily increase. I do not believe in hyphenated Americans. I do not believe in German-

Americans or Irish-Americans; and I believe just as little in English-Americans. I do not approve of American citizens of German descent forming organizations to force the United States into practical alliance with Germany because their ancestors came from Germany. Just as little do I believe in American citizens of English descent forming leagues to force the United States into an alliance with England because their ancestors came from England. (Metropolitan, October 1915.)

Among the very many lessons taught by the last year has been the lesson that the effort to combine fealty to the flag of an immigrant's natal land with fealty to the flag of his adopted land, in practice means not merely disregard of, but hostility to, the flag of the United States. When two flags are hoisted on the same pole, one is always hoisted undermost. The hyphenated American always hoists the American flag undermost. (Metropolitan, October 1915.)

There is no room in this country for hyphenated Americanism. When I refer to hyphenated Americans, I do not refer to naturalized Americans. Some of the very best Americans I have ever known were naturalized Americans, Americans born abroad. But a hyphenated American is not an American at all. This is just as true of the man who puts "native" before the hyphen as of the man who puts German or Irish or English or French before the hyphen. Americanism is a matter of the spirit and of the soul. Our allegiance must be purely to the United States. We must unsparingly condemn any man who holds any other allegiance. But if he is heartily and singly loyal to this Republic, then no matter where he was born, he is just as good an American as any one else. There is absolutely certain way of bringing this nation to ruin of preventing all possibility of its continuing to be a nation at all, would be to permit it to become a tangle of squabbling nationalities, an intricate knot of German-Americans, Irish-Americans, English-Americans, French-Americans, Scandinavian-Americans, or Italian-Americans, each preserving its separate nationality, each at heart feeling more sympathy with Europeans of that nationality than with the other citizens of the American Republic. The men who do not become Americans and nothing else are hyphenated Americans; and there ought to be no room for them in this country. The man who calls himself an American citizen and who yet shows by his actions that he is primarily the citizen of a foreign land, plays a thoroughly mischievous part in the life of our body politic. He has no place here; and the sooner he returns to the land to which he feels his real heart-allegiance, the better it will be for every good American. (Before Knights of Columbus, New York City, October 12, 1915.)

Edwin Meese III and Matthew Spaulding, in their article on "Principles of Immigration," have offered the following principles.

The Consent of the Governed. The United States is a sovereign nation. The very idea of sov-ereignty implies that each nation has the responsi-bility—and obligation—to determine its own conditions for immigration, naturalization, and citizenship.

Individuals who are not citizens do not have a right to American citizenship without the consent of the American people, as expressed through the laws of the United States. Through those laws, the people of the United States invite individuals from other countries, under certain conditions, to join them as residents and as fellow citizens. Congress has the constitutional responsibility "[t]o establish an uniform Rule of Naturalization" that sets the conditions of immigration and citizenship and to ensure the fairness and integ-rity of the legal process by which immigrants enter the country legally and, in many cases, become American citizens.

Patriotic Assimilation. The United States has always welcomed immigrants who come to this country honestly, with their work ethic and appre-ciation of freedom, seeking the promises and opportunities of the American Dream. This is because the founding principles of this nation imply that an individual of any ethnic heritage or racial background could become an American.

However, those same principles also call for— and a successful immigration policy is only possi-ble by means of—a deliberate and self-confident policy to assimilate immigrants and educate them about this country's political principles, history, institutions, and civic culture. This may be a nation of immigrants, but it is more accurate to say that this is a nation where immigrants are Americanized, sharing the benefits, responsibili-ties, and attachments of American citizenship. While the larger formative influence occurs through the social interactions and private institu-tions of civil society

and through public and pri-vate education, the federal government has a significant but limited role in ensuring the success of this crucial process.

National Security. Every nation has the right, recognized by both international and domestic law, to secure its borders and ports of entry and thereby control the goods and persons coming into its territory. Americans have always been and remain a generous people, but that does not miti-gate the duty imposed on the United States gov-ernment to know who is entering, to set the terms and conditions of entry and exit, and to control that entry and exit through fair and just means.

This task is all the more important after the events of September 11, 2001. A disorganized and chaotic immigration system encourages the cir-cumvention of immigration laws and is a clear invitation to those who wish to take advantage of our openness to harm this nation. Secure borders, especially in a time of terrorist threat, are crucial to American national security.

The Rule of Law. Immigration is no exception to the principle that the rule of law requires the fair, firm, and equitable enforcement of the law. Failure to enforce immigration laws is unfair to those who obey the law and go through the regula-tory and administrative requirements to enter the country legally.

Those who enter and remain in the country illegally are violating the law, and condoning or encouraging such violations causes a general disre-spect for the law and encourages further illegal conduct. Forgiving the intentional violation of the law in one context because it serves policy objec-tives in another undermines the rule of law. Amnesty is appropriate only when the law uninten-tionally causes great injustice or when particular cases serve the larger purposes of the law. Those who break immigration laws

should not be rewarded with legal status or other benefits, and they should be penalized in any road to citizenship.

Preference for Soft Power

One question that Noam Chomsky raises is whether the United States will do nothing more than continue the often brutal process of European expansion throughout the world. My preferred answer would be a simple "No." I realize that the world of global politics is rarely so simple. However, America has an opportunity to guide the world toward the light democratic society brings to the citizens of every nation. Will America seize the opportunity, even to the harm of its economic interests?

I would like to remind all of us that the best and preferred use of American power is what we might call soft power. Current foreign policy debate is not over whether to retreat into isolationism, but over how we should relate to the rest of the world. The United States exercises hard power through economic sanction or military force. Soft power is our ability to get what we want through attraction rather than coercion. When other countries want the same outcome we want, then we can get what we want without having to spend as much on coercion. Both dimensions of power are important, and they work best when they reinforce each other.

One source of soft power is our values. To the extent that the people of the world see us as a beacon of liberty, human rights and democracy, others are attracted to follow our lead. To the extent that we fail to live up to our proclaimed standards and seem like hypocrites, others are less willing to follow. Thus, the quality of our domestic life -- prosperity, social safety nets, and equal access to justice, democratic elections -- has a strong impact on our international position. Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy

recognized four decades ago, for example, that racial segregation at home undercut our foreign policy. The attraction of American universities for the half-million foreign students who study in them each year is another source of our soft power. Not all go home satisfied, but most gain a more realistic and positive appraisal of our country than they could get from home. For example, at a time when Chinese government propaganda was lambasting us, a former student in this country who was the son of a high Chinese official published a book widely read in Beijing that described the United States positively.

Another source of our soft power is cultural exports: films and television programs, art and academic writing, and material on the Internet. Not everyone is attracted to the values portrayed in our popular culture: some Iranian officials say that to understand what they mean by "the great Satan," one need merely watch MTV. Nevertheless, watching MTV is exactly what many young Iranians want to do. Soft power also works through international organizations like the International Monetary Fund, NATO or the Inter-American Human Rights Commission. To the extent that they shape the agenda of choices for other countries in ways that are compatible with our interests, they enhance our soft power. When others see our power as morally based, it is more effective. This is the point that Ronald Reagan's would-be disciples do not get. It is not enough for the United States merely to proclaim that we are right. Others must see it that way, too. Mr. Reagan's task was easier because most countries saw us as preferable in the cold war, but he nonetheless negotiated treaties with the Soviet Union and maintained American leadership in the United Nations.

America is the world's dominant military, economic, and cultural superpower. This has been the work of the American people. The people shared Reagan's vision that this country was a city on a hill; they have won through to absolute victory over totalitarianism that Roosevelt promised. They have made this the American century that Henry Luce envisioned.

These suggestions raise anew an issue with which Americans have had to deal. America has dealt with strains of interventionism and isolationism throughout the 20th century. Conservative anti-Communism led to strong defense of internationalism. With the end of this threat, the ideological model for foreign policy collapsed. The result has been a new interventionism based on liberal humanitarian concerns. However, conservative "realists" have sought a more constrained approach to the use of military force. This view leads to a cautious interventionism. This position discerns the differences between protecting freedom where it exists and spreading it. It is time to lay aside the ideological foreign policy framework as simply unnecessary in the post-Cold War period.

The greatest danger to America fulfilling its role in the world is its own center. We need to accept our role of benevolent hegemony, combined with a noble patriotism. We need to protect our own values and institutions and to spread these blessings to as many other nations who have the will and the ability to enjoy them. Today, at century's end, America is unquestionably the world's dominant military, economic, and cultural superpower. This has been the work of the American people. The 76 million of 1900 are now the 273 million of 2000. The descendants of the immigrants who choked the slums in 1900 have firmly interwoven into the American fabric. The descendants of the blacks

excluded by segregation in 1900 now have full civil rights and surge into the middle classes and upper ranks of society. The new immigrants from Latin America and East Asia who have arrived since the 1965 immigration reform are progressing as their counterparts did a century ago. The elite in the first third of the century fostered American traditions of excellence. Popular culture depicted the characteristic American openness in the second third of the century. These two cultural resources gave the American people the strength and the confidence to forge ahead in the last third of the century when so many in the elite lost confidence in their country. Sharing with Ronald Reagan the belief that this country is "a city on a hill," they have won through to absolute victory over totalitarianism, as Franklin Roosevelt promised, and have made this the American century that Henry Luce envisioned.

Democracies seem more likely to make the world safer. Totalitarian and Communist regimes seem prone to war within their boundaries and against those nations that border them. In helping to shape a world with more democracy and freedom, America cannot engineer from the outside. We tend to be chauvinistic. We have to be modest about what America can accomplish. Charles Krauthammer described our situation as a unipolar world. The world has one superpower, and America is it. The question that confronts us how we can use this position to advance freedom, democracy, and prosperity in world. Each of these objectives will increase American security, as well as become a benefit to other societies. We want to use this unique moment in history to bring about the kind of world we want, with political, religious, and economic freedom.

We are safer. We have eliminated the likelihood of nuclear war. We have increased the possibility of lesser wars. We will continue to see them in Asia, Africa, and Europe.

Internationalism and a cosmopolitan spirit is an important feature of the modern social world. The Stoic developed a conception of what was good for humanity as rational animals. The Christian view of humanity created in the image of God, and of God loving the world through the giving of the Son, contributed to the cosmopolitan nature of our modern world. The destruction of the master and slave relationship leads to less war generated by liberal democratic societies, although they will fight to defend their freedom. Imperialism within liberal democracy arose directly out of the aristocratic master's desire for recognition as superior. Liberal democracies have a rational desire to be equal in worth and dignity, but not superior, to other civilizations. Given states have access to resources peacefully through a global system of free trade, the previous economic incentive for war becomes less of a factor. The economic costs of war have increased exponentially with advances in technology. The fundamentally un-warlike character of liberal societies is evident in the extraordinarily peaceful relations they maintain among each other. Liberal democracy transformed aggressive and violent instincts, eliminating the motive for imperialism. We note further evidence of this impact upon foreign policy in the changes with the Russia and Eastern Europe since 1989. In one sense, the people become so self-indulgent and consumerist that they do want to risk death. The power of liberal democracy to transform culture has further evidence in the altered role of religion in Europe. Liberal democracies taught religion to be tolerant. Democracies that choose their friends and enemies by ideological considerations are

likely to have stronger and more durable allies in the end. Nor can liberal democracies forget the profound moral difference between their societies or sweep aside questions of human rights in pursuit of the powerful. The United States and other democracies have a long-term interest in preserving the sphere of democracy in the world, and in expanding it where possible and prudent. Democracies do not fight each other. Therefore, a steadily expanding liberal democrat world will be more peaceful and prosperous.

To promote the general welfare

"Promote the general welfare" refers to the interests that government has in those things that represent the common interests of its citizens, as over against what would promote the interest of an individual or group.

First, in order for the government at various levels to promote the general welfare is to recognize the right of citizens to education, the responsibility of which rests with family, religious communities, and the government. In America, public education has proved itself an important part educating citizens. Private schools are also important in education of citizens. Freedom of choice in the arena of education is a freedom that the government has the right to protect. One way to do this is to give parents who choose non-public schools for their children a voucher, calculated as a generous percentage of the average cost to the public school system to educate a child. As important as education is, government ought to remove financial barriers as much as possible.

Second, part of promoting the general welfare involves the proper care of the environment. All created things have their origin and sustenance in the creative activity of God. Therefore, human beings, using the gift of mind and rational discourse, are

morally responsible for the way they relate to the natural world. Human beings are stewards of the created world, especially, the portion of the world over which they have direct influence. Both economic and political freedoms are the best protectors of the environment. Thus, calls for sustainable and equitable approaches are valid in providing options to citizens. However, when they result in the coercive use of government power to compel behavior by business and individuals, it will be to the detriment of the quality of human life and the protection of plant and animal life. The best government can do for the protection of the environment is to protect individual, intellectual, economic, and political freedom. This protection includes the protection of the rights of private property. Further, while international agreements can encourage cross-cultural conversation, Americans need to recognize that many of the nations of the world remain governed by various forms of tyranny. Such governments have no moral claim upon free societies. Although the means of proper stewardship will change as human knowledge increases, one might consider the following possibilities.

Here are some specific things that government and citizens can do.

Show respect to natural ecosystems, while encouraging development that enhances human life.

Protect species of plant and animal life where possible.

Use technology to reduce the human suffering to which human history is a tragic testimony.

Recognize that increasing wealth, education, and technology generally leads to reduction of the birthrate, and thus to less use of the resources of the earth.

Encourage Christians and other morally concerned individuals to consider consumption of goods, services, and energy, as a potential witness to the world of how they gain their sense of self-worth from God, rather than from accumulation of wealth.

The church can encourage Christians to adopt a lifestyle that reflects the gospel, and encourage individuals to live simply and morally, putting themselves in contrast to what Americans often presented in the entertainment industry, media, and other sources of information.

Support the continuing quest for healthy disposal of waste.

Accept the use of chemicals in the growth of agriculture, while continuing to encourage the option of organic farming.

Use all available, non-human resources possible to develop needed energy resources for the improvement of the human condition.

Encourage the conservation of energy as responsible citizens and, for the Christian, as a responsible steward and of the resources of the earth.

Encourage respectful treatment of animals, although this principle ought not to discourage the use of animals in research that improves the health and life of human beings.

Encourage the exploration of space, for it, too, is part of the world that God created. It deserves the same respect that human beings owe to all of God's creation.

Accept and encourage scientific exploration into human knowledge of the world God made. Christian communities ought to engage scientific and other social, economic, and political communities in the moral uses of such knowledge.

Encourage the safety of the food supply. Recognize that use of chemicals may enhance the quantity and the health of the food supply.

Third, among the most important ways any government promotes the general welfare of the people is by adopting policies that encourage economic growth.

The economic community reflects human creation by God in their freedom, creativity, worth, dignity, and moral discernment. The economic community also reflects the fallen nature of humanity in social structures that block full participation in economic life and in personal behaviors that inhibit the fulfillment of individual potential.

Governments have the responsibility of providing sound fiscal and monetary policies that promote low inflation. In particular, the growth of the supply of money ought to increase at no greater rate than that of the GDP.

Governments must recognize that freedom and creativity vary from individual to individual, and thus that wealth distribution will vary.

Respect for the property of citizens is one of the ways the governments demonstrate their respect for their citizens. Governments have a limited right to subsume private property to the good of society.

Respect for the relationship between owners of businesses and their employees include collective bargaining arrangements, considering the fact that they rely upon each other and are in competition with each other.

In a free society, fairness suggests that all persons have access to work, without suggesting that they have a right to work. Therefore, governments have no responsibility to provide work for its citizens.

Leisure and play are as important as work in the development of human potential.

One important moral choice of citizens in a free society is the way in which they spend the wealth they accumulate. Materialism, greed, and envy lead to moral and spiritual sickness. Although the producers of goods and services will do what they can to sell what they offer, citizens have increasing responsibility to make wise and moral choices.

Poverty can be the result of unjust social structures. Where this is the case, laws must change. Poverty can be the result of personal and cultural habits. Where this is the case, one must deal with the moral and spiritual habits that lead to poverty.

Migrant workers who are in the United States deserve the same respect due to any human being.

Gambling, even if legal, is not a behavior that instills the value of work and personal discipline.

Farming will undergo lifestyle changes due to technology to which society will need to adjust. These changes include arrangements other than the family farm.

Corporations have responsibility to their stockholders, of course, but they also have responsibility to workers in terms of working conditions and wages, to the communities in which they conduct their business, and to the consumer of their goods and services.

The goal of free trade among nations is worthy, creating cooperation and competition that can lead to an increasingly peaceful world.

To secure the blessing of liberty to ourselves and to our posterity

"Secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and to our posterity" refers to the primary duty of government domestically, that of protecting the rights of its citizens.

Governments are responsible for the protection of the rights of the people to free and fair elections. They are responsible for the protection of the rights of the people to the freedoms of speech, religion, assembly, communications media, and petition for redress of grievances without fear of reprisal. They are responsible for the protection of the rights of the people to the right to privacy. Governments are responsible for the protection of the rights of the people to access to adequate food, clothing, shelter, education, and health care. Governments ought not to engage in domestic surveillance and intimidation of political opponents. The use of detention and imprisonment for the harassment and elimination of political opponents or other dissidents violates fundamental human rights. Furthermore, the mistreatment or torture of persons by governments for any purpose violates our common humanity. All moral human beings ought to regard slavery as evil.

The strength of a political system depends upon the full and willing participation of its citizens. Religious communities and individuals have the same right as all others to participate in decisions, especially in engaging the government in moral reflection.

The relation of the individual to society is at the root of every social problem. Human beings are vulnerable to hunger, thirst, heat, cold, and disease. Therefore, we need to educate our children, raise armies, and arrange for the fair distribution of property and other goods. Political life focuses upon the needs within the citizenship, and attempts to address itself to those perceived needs. Politics is about using human intelligence to support human neediness. Politics is the art of practical morality, as service to the truth, as essentially human and humanly measured care for our fellow humans. Neither beasts nor gods have need of political life. Human beings have need of political life because of the competing and cooperative interests of individuals and groups in society.

In a modern society, the State reconciles matters that citizens could not resolve in family or civil society, but where citizens need some resolution in order to be together. The political sphere is an arena of republican relations within which citizens can collectively determine and pursue their common good and recognize each other as members of a politically organized community. Government becomes a form of voluntary cooperation through which people choose to achieve some of their objectives through governmental entities because they believe that is the most effective means of achieving them. The challenge is not to expect the State to resolve all tensions, for then history would indeed end. Final reconciliation of the tensions within society and between nations is beyond political efforts.

In modern society, government stays out of the way of people discovering the virtuous and well-lived life, while not imposing it. People act upon their own judgment, make use of responsible freedom, and do so in a context free of coercion by government or religious institutions. Matters that connect with morality create some tension between religious communities and secular society. The use of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco, are part of the moral guidance of the church to its members, and sometimes turns the church into a special interest group politically. The same is true with the concern for the protection of life in the matter of abortion. The use of all forms of media, as with the Internet, movies, television, and radio, become matters of concern when persons use them for the promotion for what some religious communities consider immoral purposes. The question as to how much liberty a society can handle, as well as the nature of the Christian witness in such a society, is one that churches (as well as other religions living a modern culture) need to consider seriously. A constitution that limits the power of

government to interfere in the rights of individuals and minority groups is important to the development of such a social and political world. Truth becomes real to the minds of individuals through its own gentle persuasion, rather than through coercion. Such individual rights have their foundation in the dignity and worth of individuals as made the image of God. People cannot exercise their rights in liberty unless they are free of coercion. Government needs to allow its citizens to search for truth consistent with the dignity of individuals and the social nature of humanity. Conscience is an important element of this growth. Even though the content of conscience varies greatly from one culture to the next, the fact of a conscience in the sense of awareness of the possibility of right and wrong is important. This strategy to reduce the injustice of all governments will work only as long as the institutions of society respect constitutional government, natural rights of individuals that compels government to respect the worth and dignity of individuals, and therefore creates a large civil society of pluralism and tolerance in matters related to ultimate ends that human beings pursue. The idea of freedom existing in the relationship between individuality and community has proven to be a powerful idea and experience so far. This means that virtue is not the end of human society. From a human perspective, the actualized well-lived life is always proleptic and provisional.

Society needs more than external controls to hold people together. Society needs internal bonds that link people to each other. The subjective and rule oriented approach to ethics also forgets that the institutions of society are not simply forms within which individuals make ethical decisions. Rather, social institutions have goals and objectives that already give ethical shape to participants in those institutions. Every community of persons requires an ordering of life by definite mutual duties of its members toward each

other. Legal forms change as social roles and the nature of mutual recognition changes. Such forms of live are already legal relationships, even if one never formulates them as such. This suggests a teleological approach to ethics, as one needs to consider objective social goals alongside subjective goals of a personal ethic with mutual regard.

Moral convictions are like the air we breathe. We do not notice them because our life depends upon them. Persons living and participating in a modern civilization rarely reflect upon the value they have placed in freedom, democracy, pluralism, tolerance, scientific and technological advances. Such persons often have an assumption of progress in the comforts of daily life, as well as some the realization of moral progress. Modern persons today look back with regret concerning the treatment of Native Americans, African-Americans, women, Jews, and the colonial period. The freedom espoused by the Enlightenment did not become institutionalized until the latter half of the 20th century. Undoubtedly, future generations will discover further dimensions of freedom that this generation missed. Modernity has already shaped denominations and church members in profound ways, and in largely positive and constructive ways. Christians living in modern society today do not have to fight many battles because the free church movement and liberal theology fought those battles to help bring the church into modern civilization.

My understanding, like that of Aristotle, is that morality is a habit we develop within community. The moral virtues as explained by Aristotle required Athenian democracy and culture as a communal foundation for the explication. The same is true for persons living in a modern civilization. The difference is that modernity recognizes that large areas of the best human life remain unknown to it. For that reason, religious tolerance and intellectual freedom were significant in the forming of modernity.

164

While our allegiance to God takes precedence over our allegiance to any state, we acknowledge the vital function of government as a principal vehicle for the ordering of society.

Because we know ourselves to be responsible to God for social and political life, we declare the following relative to governments:

Basic Freedoms and Human Rights

We hold governments responsible for the protection of the rights of the people to free and fair elections and to the freedoms of speech, religion, assembly, communications media, and petition for redress of grievances without fear of reprisal; to the right to privacy; and to the guarantee of the rights to adequate food, clothing, shelter, education, and health care. The form and the leaders of all governments should be determined by exercise of the right to vote guaranteed to all adult citizens. We also strongly reject domestic surveillance and intimidation of political opponents by governments in power and all other misuses of elective or appointive offices. The use of detention and imprisonment for the harassment and elimination of political opponents or other dissidents violates fundamental human rights. Furthermore, the mistreatment or torture of persons by governments for any purpose violates Christian teaching and must be condemned and/or opposed by Christians and churches wherever and whenever it occurs.

The Church regards the institution of slavery as an infamous evil. All forms of enslavement are totally prohibited and shall in no way be tolerated by the Church.

The Book of Resolutions #272 urges the development of a department of peace.

#278 supports the development of a tax fund for people who do not want to contribute to

the military. #283 urges the end of all forms of slavery.

Political Responsibility

The strength of a political system depends upon the full and willing participation of its citizens. The Church should continually exert a strong ethical influence upon the state, supporting policies and programs deemed to be just and opposing policies and programs that are unjust.

Church and State Relations

The United Methodist Church has for many years supported the separation of church and state. In some parts of the world this separation has guaranteed the diversity of religious expressions and the freedom to worship God according to each person's conscience. Separation of church and state means no organic union of the two, but it does permit

interaction. The state should not use its authority to promote particular religious beliefs (including atheism), nor should it require prayer or worship in the public schools, but it should leave students free to practice their own religious convictions. We believe that the state should not attempt to control the church, nor should the church seek to dominate the state. The rightful and vital separation of church and state, which has served the cause of religious liberty, should not be misconstrued as the abolition of all religious expression from public life.

The Book of Resolutions #242 affirms the continuation of chaplaincy, encourages the removal of tax favoritism to clergy, affirms the religious tax exemption because of the value religious institutions to society, and affirms the right of corporate religious action that affects political life. #243 asserts that the church must be the conscience of the government, quoting Martin Luther King, Jr., “The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state. It must be the guide and the critic of the sate, and never its tool.”

Freedom of Information

Citizens of all countries should have access to all essential information regarding their government and its policies. Illegal and unconscionable activities directed against persons or groups by their own governments must not be justified or kept secret, even under the guise of national security.

Over seventy countries around the world have implemented some form of freedom of information legislation. These laws—also described as open records or (especially in the United States) sunshine laws—set rules on access to information or records held by government bodies.

Sweden's Freedom of the Press Act of 1766 is thought to be the oldest such law.

Many more countries are working towards introducing such laws, and many regions of countries with national legislation have local laws. For example, all states of the US have laws governing access to public documents of state and local taxing entities,

in addition to that country's Freedom of Information Act which governs documents in the possession of the federal government.

In general, such laws define a legal process by which government information is available to the public; In many countries there are vague constitutional guarantees for the right of access to information, but usually these are unused where specific legislation to support them does not exist.

A related concept is open meetings legislation, which allows access to government meetings, not just to the records of them. In many countries, privacy or data protection laws may be part of the freedom of information legislation; the concepts are often closely tied together in political discourse.

A basic principle behind most freedom of information legislation is that the burden of proof falls on the body asked for information, not the person asking for it. The requester does not usually have to give an explanation for their request, but if the information is not disclosed a valid reason has to be given.

In the United States the Freedom of Information Act was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson on July 4, 1966 and went into effect the following year. The Electronic Freedom of Information Act Amendments were signed by President Bill Clinton on October 2, 1996.

The Act applies only to federal agencies. However, all of the states, as well as the District of Columbia and some territories, have enacted similar statutes to require disclosures by agencies of the state and of local governments, though some are significantly broader than others. Many combine this with Open Meetings legislation, which requires government meetings to be held publicly.

Education

We believe that every person has the right to education. We also believe that the responsibility for education of the young rests with the family, faith communities, and the government. In society, this function can best be fulfilled through public policies that ensure access for all persons to free public elementary and secondary schools and to post-secondary schools of their choice. Persons should not be precluded by financial barriers from access to church-related and other independent institutions of higher education. We affirm the right of public and independent colleges and universities to exist, and we endorse public policies that ensure access and choice and that do not create unconstitutional entanglements between church and state.

The Book of Resolutions #242 specifically opposes vouchers and other forms of school choice.

The country needs a system of public education that prepares its students for participation in a liberal democracy called the United States. School has the purpose of making students both smarter and better. It has the purpose of developing intellect and character. Intellectual development is a given. The matter of character has its foundation in the fact of human interaction. Every time we engage the environment, every time we relate to another human being, we face matters of character. Schools teach character through everything they do to hold their students to certain standards of behavior. Schools also need to bring such standards to intellectual statement.

The first component of this education is the content of the curriculum. Students will need an adequate grasp of the English language in order to be officially literate, an adequate grasp of math and science, and an adequate grasp of American history and culture. Students need education in their rights and duties as citizens of this country. America is a product of Western civilization. Students need education in the philosophical tradition of Athens, Rome, and Christianity, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, and various social reform movements in the 1800's and 1900's. Such

ideas are part of the glue that holds together the diverse elements of American culture. For Europeans who came to America originally, America was the New World of promise and possibility. For some Americans, the birth of America has meant to genocide (Native American) and slavery (African Americans.) However, part of the challenge of society is to help all citizens experience America in the way the founders intended – a place where all persons experience it as place that guarantees them rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. An adequate understanding of the Western tradition makes one realize that it was never a monolithic culture. It was always multi-ethnic and multi-cultural. The appreciation of other cultures from Latin America, Africa, and Asia continues a respect that is already part of the Western tradition. In order to adequately appreciate the cultural history of other nations, one needs to have a basis of appreciation for the culture in which one lives. Without such an appreciation of the ground on which one already stands, one becomes an alien and stranger to the culture in which one lives. Exposure to the philosophical traditions of Western civilization exposes students to the perennial questions of human life and society. Western tradition is a call to thoughtfulness. The Western tradition is self-critical, re-examining, re-adjusting, re-defining, and changing. The tradition is one of discussion and dissent, as much as of affirmation and agreement. We must also remember that the West has produced liberal democracy. As such, the West has set a high standard for moral, political, economic, and social standards for the rest of the world. The West takes the lead in appreciation of individual liberty, equality, human rights, and the inviolability of conscience.

The second component of this education is character. Students need character modeled for them at home and community, as well as school. They also need principles

of morality stated and analyzed. Honesty, fairness, self-discipline, fidelity to task, friendship, family, personal responsibility, and love of country, are important matters of character. Schools can teach such principles through literature and history. In fact, one best teaches morality through example and stories. One might think of Lincoln, of Aesop, of Washington, of Socrates, of the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights, the Gettysburg Address, of Martin Luther King Jr., of stories in the Bible, and many more.

The third component is choice. As a society, we need to find ways of bringing competition into the field of education. Parents need a role in deciding who will educate their children.

Civil Obedience and Civil Disobedience

Governments and laws should be servants of God and of human beings. Citizens have a duty to abide by laws duly adopted by orderly and just process of government. But governments, no less than individuals, are subject to the judgment of God. Therefore, we recognize the right of individuals to dissent when acting under the constraint of conscience and, after having exhausted all legal recourse, to resist or disobey laws that they deem to be unjust or that are discriminately enforced.

Even then, respect for law should be shown by refraining from violence and by being willing to accept the costs of disobedience. We do not encourage or condone, under any circumstances, any form of violent protest or action against anyone involved in the abortion dilemma.

We offer our prayers for those in rightful authority who serve the public, and we support their efforts to afford justice and equal opportunity for all people. We assert the duty of churches to support those who suffer because of their stands of conscience represented by nonviolent beliefs or acts. We urge governments to ensure civil rights, as defined by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to persons in legal jeopardy because of those nonviolent acts.

The Book of Resolutions #240 and #253 says that the USA Patriot Act has the intent of stifling dissent and encourages domestic surveillance of political opponents, immigrants, and other minority groups.

Civil disobedience is the active refusal to obey certain laws, demands and commands of a government or of an occupying power without resorting to physical violence. It is one of the primary tactics of nonviolent resistance. In its most nonviolent form (known as ahimsa or satyagraha) it could be said that it is compassion in the form of respectful disagreement.

Civil disobedience has been used in nonviolent resistance movements in India (Gandhi's social welfare campaigns and campaigns to speed up independence from the British Empire), in South Africa in the fight against apartheid, in the American Civil Rights Movement and in peace movements worldwide.

The American author Henry David Thoreau pioneered the modern theory behind this practice in his 1849 essay Civil Disobedience, originally titled "Resistance to Civil Government". The driving idea behind the essay was that of self-reliance, and how one is in morally good standing as long as one can "get off another man's back"; so one doesn't have to physically fight the government, but one must not support it or have it support one (if one is against it). This essay has had a wide influence on many later practitioners of civil disobedience. In the essay, Thoreau explained his reasons for having refused to pay taxes as an act of protest against slavery and against the Mexican-American War. In seeking an active form of civil disobedience, one may choose to deliberately break certain laws, such as by forming a peaceful blockade or occupying a facility illegally. Protesters practice this non-violent form of civil disorder with the expectation that they will be arrested, or even attacked or beaten by the authorities. Protesters often undergo training in advance on how to react to arrest or to attack, so that they will do so in a manner that quietly or limply resists without threatening the authorities.

For example, Mahatma Gandhi outlined the following rules:

A civil resister (or satyagrahi) will harbor no anger.

He will suffer the anger of the opponent.

In so doing he will put up with assaults from the opponent, never retaliate; but he will not submit, out of fear of punishment or the like, to any order given in anger. When any person in authority seeks to arrest a civil resister, he will voluntarily submit to the arrest, and he will not resist the attachment or removal of his own property, if any, when it is sought to be confiscated by authorities.

If a civil resister has any property in his possession as a trustee, he will refuse to surrender it, even though in defending it he might lose his life. He will, however, never retaliate.

Retaliation includes swearing and cursing.

Therefore, a civil resister will never insult his opponent, and therefore also not take part in many of the newly coined cries which are contrary to the spirit of ahimsa. A civil resister will not salute the Union Flag, nor will he insult it or officials, English or Indian.

In the course of the struggle if anyone insults an official or commits an assault upon him, a civil resister will protect such official or officials from the insult or attack even at the risk of his life.

Gandhi distinguished between his idea of satyagraha and the passive resistance of the west.

The Death Penalty

We believe the death penalty denies the power of Christ to redeem, restore and transform all human beings. The United Methodist Church is deeply concerned about crime throughout the world and the value of any life taken by a murder or homicide. We believe all human life is sacred and created by God and therefore, we must see all human life as significant and valuable. When governments implement the death penalty (capital punishment), then the life of the convicted person is devalued and all possibility of change in that person's life ends. We believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ and that the possibility of reconciliation with Christ comes through repentance. This gift of reconciliation is offered to all individuals without exception and gives all life new dignity and sacredness. For this reason, we oppose the death penalty (capital punishment) and urge its elimination from all criminal codes.

The Book of Resolutions #246 (see #255 as well) refers to Jesus setting aside the Old Testament principle of an eye for an eye in Matthew 5:38-39 and in Jesus setting aside the death penalty in John 8:1-11. As a vehicle of retribution, it denies the principle of redemption and reconciliation in Scripture. It devalues yet another human life. #247 especially directs churches to oppose the death penalty for juveniles.

Criminal Justice and Restorative Justice

To protect all persons from encroachment upon their personal and property rights, governments have established mechanisms of law enforcement and courts. A wide array of sentencing options serves to express community outrage, incapacitate dangerous offenders, deter crime, and offer opportunities for rehabilitation. We support governmental measures designed to reduce and eliminate crime that are consistent with respect for the basic freedom of persons.

We reject all misuse of these mechanisms, including their use for the purpose of revenge or for persecuting or intimidating those whose race, appearance, lifestyle, economic condition, or beliefs differ from those in authority. We reject all careless, callous or discriminatory enforcement of law that withholds justice from all non-English speaking persons and persons with disabilities. We further support measures designed to remove the social conditions that lead to crime, and we encourage continued positive interaction between law enforcement officials and members of the community at large.

In the love of Christ, who came to save those who are lost and vulnerable, we urge the creation of a genuinely new system for the care and restoration of victims, offenders, criminal justice officials, and the community as a whole. Restorative justice grows out of biblical authority, which emphasizes a right relationship with God, self, and community. When such relationships are violated or broken through crime, opportunities are created to make things right.

Most criminal justice systems around the world are retributive. These retributive justice systems profess to hold the offender accountable to the state and use punishment

as the equalizing tool for accountability. In contrast, restorative justice seeks to hold the offender accountable to the victimized person, and to the disrupted community. Through God's transforming power, restorative justice seeks to repair the damage, right the wrong, and bring healing to all involved, including the victim, the offender, the families, and the community. The Church is transformed when it responds to the claims of discipleship by becoming an agent of healing and systemic change.

The Book of Resolutions #249 says that the media portrays the poor and racial minorities as criminals. #250 expresses concern for the abuse of the grand jury system in the United States. #257 opposes privatizing the prison system, due to the principle of making a profit off the punishment of human beings. #258 rejects retributive justice and establishes principles of restorative justice. #260 affirms ministries to the victims of crime.

Military Service

We deplore war and urge the peaceful settlement of all disputes among nations. From the beginning, the Christian conscience has struggled with the harsh realities of violence and war, for these evils clearly frustrate God's loving purposes for humankind. We yearn for the day when there will be no more war and people will live together in peace and justice. Some of us believe that war, and other acts of violence, are never acceptable to Christians. We also acknowledge that many Christians believe that, when peaceful alternatives have failed, the force of arms may regretfully be preferable to unchecked aggression, tyranny and genocide. We honor the witness of pacifists who will not allow us to become complacent about war and violence. We also respect those who support the use of force, but only in extreme situations and only when the need is clear beyond reasonable doubt, and through appropriate international organizations. We urge the establishment of the rule of law in international affairs as a means of elimination of war, violence, and coercion in these affairs.

We reject national policies of enforced military service as incompatible with the gospel. We acknowledge the agonizing tension created by the demand for military service by national governments. We urge all young adults to seek the counsel of the Church as they reach a conscientious decision concerning the nature of their responsibility as citizens. Pastors are called upon to be available for counseling with all young adults who face conscription, including those who conscientiously refuse to cooperate with a system of conscription.

We support and extend the ministry of the Church to those persons who conscientiously oppose all war, or any particular war, and who therefore refuse to serve in the armed forces or to cooperate with systems of military conscription. We also support and extend the Church's ministry to those persons who conscientiously choose to

serve in the armed forces or to accept alternative service. As Christians we are aware that neither the way of military action, nor the way of inaction is always righteous before God.

The Book of Resolutions #289 urges the closing of the US Army School of

Americas, located in Ft. Benning, Georgia.

The World Community

God has created one world and one humanity. Technology has created a new awareness of this oneness. It challenges the human ability to achieve a stable world. Among the challenges are these: social injustice, war, exploitation, privilege, population growth, international ecological problems, proliferation of nuclear weapons, transnational corporations, and tyranny. Each generation since World War II has to do its part to find answers to such problems if human beings are to have a future. Religious communities will need to do their part in creating such a future. In particular, political leaders will need to cultivate respect for the natural world, for the free formation of families, for honoring individuality among their citizens and the citizens of other nations, and develop a political world that focuses upon pluralism, tolerance, non-violent resolution of disputes, and liberty. It will not be helpful to achieving such a human future if liberal democracies place themselves on an equal moral level with dictatorships of the political left or the political right, or with theocracies of the nature of Islamic countries that impose Sharia law.

The diversity of nations and cultures is a gift of God. Every nation falls short of justice and respect of its citizens. Every nation gives some regard to the general welfare of its citizens. Yet, respect for the diversity of nations and cultures ought not to blind anyone from the moral considerations involved in what makes for justice and peace.

Clearly, some nations possess more military and economic power than do others. Upon the powerful rests responsibility to exercise their wealth and influence with restraint. All nations have the right and duty to determine their destiny. The major political powers ought to use their nonviolent power to maximize the political, social, and economic self-determination of other nations rather than to further their own special interests. In particular, liberal democracies ought to share their knowledge of the moral and practical value of political, social, and economic liberty that will lead to an increasingly just international economic order and responsible use of the resources the earth and the creativity of individuals provides.

War is not conducive to the desired human future of justice, liberty, and peace. Nations ought to use only to prevent such evils as genocide, brutal suppression of human rights, and unprovoked international aggression. However, the first moral duty of all nations is to resolve by peaceful means every dispute that arises between or among them. The romantic notion of disarmament will always touch the heart, but world politics demands military strength to maintain liberty. Human history is a record of tyrants imposing their will upon their citizens and expanding their tyranny to other countries. The world remains a dangerous place, on in which some rulers will seek the obliteration of liberty.

International justice and law is an important component in the peaceful resolution of disputes. The United Nations and the International Court of Justice can become significant contributors to this system. International aid and cooperation can contribute toward this system. The UN Declaration of Human Rights is an important place to begin.

Liberal democracy on the world scene

I will now provide a sketch of why liberal democracy provides the best possible organization of our social world. Do you even think I need to do this? It seems I do. Many within American society have lost confidence in the common ground they share and in their ability to consider some things more valuable than others are. All persons are equal under the law. All people are of sacred worth and dignity. However, this type of equality does not mean equality of outcome. Inequality of outcome does not necessarily mean someone has oppressed you, held you back, or stolen from you. Some people work harder, gain more learning, are more productive, and are harder to replace. Some ideas are better than others are. Some values have more endurance than others do. Some works of art stand the test of the time in ways others do not. Some cultures have accomplished more than others have done, and thus, are more worthy study than other cultures are. Every culture has something to contribute to the improvement of the human life on this earth. However, not every contribution of these cultures is equal.

Liberal democracy provides a powerful economic basis for the strength of its civilization. It values the body, its life, health, and freedom of movement and from abuse. This civilization assumes the importance of our bodily senses, imagination, and thought. It values emotional attachment to persons and things as an important part of our happiness. It affirms the value of improving the life of ordinary persons. It assumes the ownership of property and seeking employment. It assumes that if some area of life is bad, we can improve it. We can always improve things. There is the tendency to

maximize the benefits of any action. This society has concern for the physical environment in which we live and seek its improvement; technology will be the means to make that improvement. Modernism views life, including social relations, friends, jobs, or health, as an ongoing problem-solving enterprise. This affirmation of ordinary life combines citizen ethic and the honor ethic. Modernism sought to relieve the often miserable and suffering condition of the mass of humanity. The Reformation contributed the concept of life as a calling. Cultural movements or indicators of this trend are the development of the novel, the idealization of marriage and family, sentiment and feeling in pietism, Methodist, and Hasidim, and the feeling for nature.

Modern natural science is the mechanism that explains the direction and coherence of human history. This means a view of reality apprehended as constituted by clearly separable components that relate to each other in structures of causality, time, and space. Plato and Aristotle held that individual minds have an important role in the fulfillment of social persons. People are born into their social position. Modern civilization places a higher and harder demand on individuals. Our lives are not pre-determined from birth. Modern life does not have absolute stability, for we have an inter-dependent system of needs. Sovereignty does not rest in any institution, but in the relation of the whole. It is a division of labor within society. No one has pre-determined places. Science is the foundation for the technological superiority of modern society. Technology confers military advantage and vast possibilities of economic production, especially in the spirit of free enterprise. This provides an increasingly rational organization of labor that dictates consistent, large-scale changes in social structure. The demand for rationality leads to homogenizing of the division of labor. By design, free enterprise distributes the

most talented and ambitious individuals will go into business, rather than into politics, the military, universities, or the church.

Liberal democracy does not impose beliefs and values upon civil society. It accepts the values of pluralism and intellectual tolerance. People can argue rationally about our ideals and about the conformity of practices to our ideals. We also assume that such rational arguments can make a difference. Modernism moves toward pluralism that suggests the capacity to move through separate "multiple realities"; the reality of everyday experience, technical scientific reality, fantasy, and so on. These "realities" need not be related or integrated.

Our civilization provides natural networks within which people express their spiritedness (Plato) or self-esteem. Individuals find their sense of worth and dignity honored in liberal democracy through popular sovereignty and through the guarantee of basic rights under the rule of law. Humanism seeks justice based on our equal worth as human beings. We can give an account of the central human capacities and functions and of the basic human needs and rights, in such a universal manner that it should guide our thought and planning, not only in the "west," but also throughout the world. Such capabilities exert a moral claim in that all persons in the world need to develop. Human beings are creatures such that they can become fully capable of the major human functions. Such a list involves a long list of opportunities for functioning of life, such that it is rational to want them, no matter what else one might want. If one ends up having a plan of life that does not make use of all of them, having the chance to choose a life that does harms no one. Politics has an urgent role to play here, getting citizens the tools they need both to choose at all and to have a realistic option of exercising the most valuable

functions. The choice of whether and how to use the tools is up to the individual in their freedom. Individuals are dignified participants in shaping their lives. The protection of basic human rights is a high degree of priority, even when it interferes with some elements of traditional religious discourse and practice. To those who object that violating others is part of the free exercise of their religion, we should reply that some things we do not allow people to do to other people. These rights would appear to be necessary for all people if they are to carry out their plans of life. They have a strong claim for political recognition as basic in a pluralistic society. The modern social world commits itself to protecting these rights for all individuals, regardless of whether it contains groups that do not like individuals to have these rights. The fundamental bearer of rights is the individual human being. A violation of a person is no better when it comes from some group to which the person belongs than when it comes from the state. Each person has a course from birth to death that is not precisely the same as that of any other person. Each person is one and not more than one. Each person feels pain in his or her own body. The fundamental entity for politics is a living body that goes from here to there, from birth to death, never fused with any other. The idea that all human beings have a core of moral personhood that exerts claims on government no matter what the social world has done to it is an idea that anyone who suffers injustice at the hands of one's society need to vindicate their equality and to argue for change. This position promotes the rights of women, opposes racism, defends religious toleration, and supports equality of opportunity regardless of social class. One should reject identity politics of every type and ground the appeal for justice in general human rights.

Other civilizations experience internal contradictions because of the anger that arises from the failure of the civilization to recognize individual worth and dignity. It leads to the master and slave relationship that is so typical of most societies. Masters find fulfillment of their drive toward self-esteem by denying that right to others in society. Liberal democracies experience shame when they do not live up to those ideals. They have a proper sense of pride with they experience a proper proportion of their worth in the presence of others. The obvious economic orientation of liberal democracies contains an equally important and subtle influence of the ethical and religious value of the dignity and worth of individuals. We find this value reflected in a variety of ways. Liberal democracies are not self-sufficient. The community life on which they depend must ultimately come from a source different from liberalism itself. We assume the need for sympathetic understanding of others, including those with whom we disagree. It reduces inappropriate nationalism while restoring national pride. It encourages the art of associating in small communities. Work becomes a means of expressing one's worth and dignity rather than simple drudgery. Liberal democracy has destroyed the master and slave relationship that has existed in the past and exists today in most of the civilizations of the world. Therefore, our civilization places a high demand upon individuals to find their unique place within culture.

Sympathetic understanding is an important aspect of this society. Emotions of care and sympathy lie at the heart of the ethical life. No society can afford not to cultivate them. As we struggle to overcome a legacy of great injustice, we need all the love and sympathy we can muster. Our evaluative judgments contribute to our emotional life; these judgments are likely to have been learned in society and shaped by the norms of

appropriateness within that society. We will need to be alert to the social origins of desire, preference, and emotion. A cognitive view of emotion holds that perceptions and beliefs of a certain sort play a central role in emotional experience. An opponent might suggest that emotions such as grief, anger, fear, and love do not involve any more of cognitive interpretation of the world. Rather, they are unthinking energies that push a person around. Society shapes human cognition in the relevant area. Emotions embody ways of seeing and beliefs, and therefore respond to a change in beliefs about value, worth, and salience. We learn our emotional repertory. We can alter emotions through altering the beliefs on which they rest. Our emotional repertory is highly functional and crucial. Fear of death and bodily injury is universal in some form, because the belief that these are important bad things is universal. The grief at the deaths of loved ones, joy at their presence and safety, anger at the agents of willful damages to them or to oneself also are universal. The needs of the human body are so prominent within the emotional life as occasions for fear, anger, joy, relief, and love and gratitude, is itself everywhere. However, within this generally shared biological framework is a great deal of room for social shaping and variation., especially for emotional expression and behavior, normative judgments about an emotion, the classification of emotions recognized, and individual histories that provide a variety of emotional responses. Change that does not include structural, institutional, and legal change is likely to be ineffective and short-lived. Social and institutional meanings have no agency and reality on their own apart from their role in the judgments and actions of individuals. Social change may occur at an institutional level before many of the agents in question have themselves changed. Laws might be made that have implications for the structure of racist emotion even by people

who still experience such emotions at one level of their personalities because that is in the best interest of all, while such changes in institutional meaning will gradually alter the meanings to which individuals attach themselves.

Liberal democracy leads to a cosmopolitan spirit. We have a cosmopolitan spirit in our concern for worth, dignity, and liberty of all human beings. All persons are worthy of equal concern and respect. I suggest a form of liberalism that begins with the equal worth of human beings, in virtue of their basic human capacities for choice and reasoning. This rationality focuses on the pragmatic rationality that involves problem solving in everyday life. The modern social world is anti-feudal, opposed to political hierarchies of rank, caste, birth, gender, or sexual orientation. Such individualism does not suggest egoism or a preference for the type of person who has no deep need of others. Self-sufficiency and detachment from the world is a characteristic of the Stoics and Spinoza, but even more so with Buddhist and Hindu traditions. Compassion, care, and love are an essential part of what I propose here. We cannot have a satisfactory life plan without relationships with others. However, I do insist, distinct from other political traditions, on the separateness of one life from another, and the equal importance of each life, seen on its own terms rather than as part of a larger organic or corporate whole. Philosophically, we need to regard each human being as an end rather than as a means to the ends of others. The goal of politics is the improvement of lives taken one by one and seen as separate ends, rather than the amelioration of the organic whole or the totality. My concern is with freedom and with spheres of choice. I understand liberty in close conjunction with ideas of equal worth and respect. The choices that deserve protection are those of central importance to the development and expression of personhood. The

goal is to put people into a position of agency and choice, not to push them into functioning in ways deemed desirable. This expresses the joy that people have throughout the world in using their own bodies and minds. No one has the right to violate other human beings. All human beings are of equal dignity and worth, no matter what station they hold in society. The primary source of this worth is a power of moral choice within us, consisting in the ability to plan a life in accordance with our evaluation of ends. The moral equality of persons gives all persons a fair claim to certain types of treatment at the hands of society and politics. Differences of social hierarchy, such as feudalism, hereditary monarchy, and the caste system, are morally relevant matters to address. Such a view of political arrangements rejects utopian and ideological approaches. The primary concern in our modern social world is the protection of spheres of choice.

America amid the nations

I want to mention some reasons why many people in America, especially among mainline church leadership, academia, and the political Left, have grown distrustful of the use of American power in the world. Domestically, for example, the United Methodist Church, in its Book of Resolutions #240 and 253, condemns the Patriot Act for its use of domestic surveillance. Resolution #340 affirms the values of multilateralism and rejects direct American action. It specifically expresses concern for the dominance of American military might. Such are the signs that certain citizens have lost confidence in America. Many Americans lost confidence in the academic community that promoted this radical critique of America. The academic community in general and the political Left viewed the use of American strength as evil. They did so because of perceived

racism and sexism, as well as the failure to use power wisely in Vietnam and with the CIA.

The end of the Cold War has raised another question. Does the end of the Cold War mean that the United States should relinquish its power so that humanity moves from a bi-polar world to a multi-polar world? I hear this question from the United Nations as a whole, as well as France and Germany in particular. I also hear the question from some Americans who fear that that the amount of power America has will corrupt us. The United Methodist Church in its Book of Resolutions #340, expresses concern that the United States has the strongest military in the world. It has concerns for the abuse power, which it enumerates, that suggest this abuse. I will suggest that such fears are valid only if we stop seeking the actualization of the ideal of valuing individuals and their worth and dignity. Frankly, the fact that the United States, in all of its relative youthfulness, remains the sole superpower in the world is one that should give the world great hope and comfort. What would the world be like if the old Soviet Union had this kind of power? The problem is not the fact of one nation possessing this much power, but the moral problem of how to use of it. That moral problem faces American leaders at both political and economic levels. Generally, Americans are far from self-righteous about their country - most have a lover's quarrel with it. Americans reluctantly go to war and reluctantly use their massive weapons.

Does the United States need to moderate national sovereignty and increase global loyalty? It sounds reasonable, and even sounds like a humble thing to do. However, have you considered that such a proposition assumes the moral equality of all social worlds? Would you want representatives from Libya judging American action in the world? What

moral basis would such military dictatorship have in judging what the United States does, given what they have done to achieve power and to keep power? I invite you to consider what military dictatorships do to the citizens within their countries, and then tell me how you can agree that such leaders have any right to sit in judgment of the United States. I hope you will agree with me that the assumption of the equality of all political worlds is one with which those living in liberal democracies can hold. We must not pretend that the difference between political worlds does not exist. We must not pretend the moral equality of all political worlds. Such confusion leads some thinkers to propose that the United Nations is similar to the Articles of Confederation. The difference is that each of the states that accepted the Articles of Confederation accepted liberal democracy. The United Nations is an organization that includes brutal regimes and dictators who need to pass from the scene of world history. Do you realize, fellow citizen, that when you call for the United States to submit to organizations within the United Nations, that you call for the justification of our actions on the world stage to brutal dictatorships? For a liberal democracy to surrender sovereignty, even in a world facing the possibility of nuclear confrontation, would be a truly immoral act against its own citizens. Only the United States can judge the justice of its own cause, because this nation has experienced the value of the social world called liberal democracy. No military dictatorship has the right to judge what the best interest of any liberal democracy is. Military dictatorships do not have valid interests, for they do not stand upon respect for the individuals that live within them. Although the United Nations may provide a place for all nations to talk, the illusion that its existence creates of equality among the social worlds represented in it is hardly helpful. Contrary to the advice offered by the United Methodist Church Book of

Resolutions #309, which affirms United Methodist support for the International Criminal Court, such a court should not abrogate domestic law. For this reason, the peacekeeping forces of the United Nations must remain small, while the United States continues to have the strongest military in the world. For this reason, an international police force is not an option for liberal democracies. For this reason, an international income tax that supports the agencies of the United Nations is preposterous in that it supports military and communist dictatorships in the oppression of their people.

Noam Chomsky looks at American use of force since the end of the Cold War in 1989 and sees continuation of European colonial expansion. In particular, American intervention in Latin America has been to subvert democratically elected governments in favor of regimes friendlier to American corporate interests. Further, American intervention in the Middle East, and in particular Iraq, is to protect the energy resources needed for the continuation of the American economy. The energy resources of the world must be in proper hands—that is, American hands. America has its allies in oppression, it regional clients that aid oppression, and its oil corporations, to protect through its military power. For him, America has a corner on the security market, essentially becoming the "military for hire" for corporate interests, for Europe, and for Japan. The military task of the United States in this new world is to impose order and security. The unprecedented economic dominance and military of the United States allows it to be the first global power the world has ever seen. The hope of corporate America was that America would use all this power to protect corporate interests.

I have been quite direct and blunt on this point. My hope is that you will reconsider your position, and have confidence in what is possible in the world. You see, I

think that one day every person in the world will live in a nation that respects his or her rights, worth, and dignity. They will have the right to pursue their basic plan of life. If that day comes, it will be because the United States discerns the proper and moral use of its power. That power includes both soft power of its free culture and economic life, as well as its military power.

War, peace, pacifism, and international institutions

When peaceful alternatives fail, one may regrettably prefer the force of arms to unchecked aggression, tyranny, and genocide. A nation should use war only as a last resort to prevent such evils as genocide, brutal suppression of human rights, and unprovoked international aggression. From a Christian perspective, the government should use force only in extreme situations and only when the need is clear beyond reasonable doubt. Surely, the moral duty of all governments is to resolve disputes peacefully. The channeling of human and capital resources into military spending takes away from the general well-being of the nation. Although such a statement may lead some to urge complete disarmament, at least in the near future, such a possibility is more like a heavenly world than a human one. My disagreement with some of the teaching of the churches, such as the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church is when they condemn the production, possession, and use of nuclear weapons. The judicious use of such weapons, as in World War II, is nothing to condemn. The possession and production of such weapons, when it keeps others from using them, is a relative good for peace and justice.

War is incompatible with the teaching and example of Jesus. The matter of non-resistance on which Jesus insisted has a specific social and cultural context that we need

to consider before we can discern the norm for Christian behavior it suggests. Ambrose and Augustine suggested this meant that no Christian could defend oneself from violence, for this would harm genuine love toward the neighbor. However, one could act to defend one's neighbor. A further problem arises when abstracting the non-resistance taught Jesus to another cultural setting, the matter of pacifism arises as a national policy. When we recognize the teaching of Jesus as a strategy for dealing with the specific circumstance of the occupation of Rome, we can see better the norm suggested. I think I could make a strong case that had Judaism in the first century accepted what Jesus taught in this matter, the terrible destruction of the Temple and of the city of Jerusalem would not have occurred. Of course, Jesus noted that it was unlikely his contemporaries would follow this path, leading to the destruction of the Temple. The point is that non-resistance was a form of life designed for a particular setting. God clearly called Jesus to a form of life that led to resistance to the oppressed and oppressor system established by Roman and Jewish authorities. The cross is an example of what happens to people who live in such a system, even when innocent of the charges brought against them. It was a strategy of courageous resistance to a violent system, a way to get along that had the potential of helping one survive in a difficult setting. Jesus wanted to avoid the immense loss of human life and culture that he foresaw if Judaism in Palestine continued down the path of active military resistance to Rome. He foresaw the expansion of evil, and believed the principle of non-resistance in this setting would reduce that expansion. If the setting changes, the discerning follower of Jesus at least needs to consider if non-resistance remains valid or if non-resistance leads to the expansion of evil.

We need to consider whether anything can justify the response of war. Can the other be so violent that it justifies violence, with the promise that on the other side we will get to a more peaceful place? My assumption is that the pacifist would answer in the negative, tacitly suggesting the moral equivalency of all violence. The pacifist elevates non-violence into a moral absolute, applicable to all times, places, and cultures. My assumption is that those who answer in the positive do not want peace less than the pacifist does. Rather, they believe that certain occasions require a violent response in order to get to a peaceful and just place, and thus assume that we can make moral distinctions in the use of violence. Non-violence may actually increase the potential for lack of peace in a land, and thus becomes an ineffective means to accomplish its worthy end. Pacifism wills the demise of the State in which the pacifist lives. That demise will occur through the emergence of violence. Consequently, one needs to make the judgment of whether one's society is one for which one willingly fights.

I want to be quite clear on one point. It matters what type of system one defends. While no system embodies the future rule of God, a modern culture is not simple principalities ruled by demonic powers. In a provisional way, modernity allows for the flourishing of enough respect for individuality, freedom, equality, fraternity, peace, and justice, that I believe many Christians justly defend it. We might say that democratic societies are in principle non-violent and therefore represent the redemption of principalities and powers. However, if one defends an oppressive state, a communist state, a dictatorship, a fascist state, one may well simply be caught up in an evil system and have few options. However, one still participates in that evil by defending it. I would suggest that pacifism would be a legitimate response if one lived in such a political

system. The question for pacifism is whether any social system is worthy of defense. Such a position assumes the moral equivalency of every social world. God is on the side of all humanity, and desires the best for humanity. In God, humanity has a partner in moving toward the best possible human life. Clearly, we need to deal with whether some systems of social organization move us toward that best possible human life, and whether some systems of social organization bring us further from that purpose. My position should be clear. Anyone who would deprive the modern social world, and democratic society itself, of the tools to defend itself in the world in which we live today, does not have any love for their country. They want its destruction. Anyone who promotes pacifism for a democratic society in this human world hates the system and the country in which he or she live.

Many things should chasten and temper the pride that I hope we can have, but nothing a nation has done should make it impossible for a constitutional democracy to regain self-respect. One of the gifts of modern civilization is its capacity to change. Civilizations once given to colonialism no longer practice it. The same is true of slavery. To say that certain acts do make this impossible is to abandon the importance of our being agents of history and those who shape our future. We would place ourselves upon the sideline of history. No country ever has been pure.

Suppose that America had done things one could not have imagined doing, and finds that one is still alive. After all, any of our lives has the possibility of genuinely tragic choices. At that point, we could commit suicide, we could lead a life of bottom-less disgust and self-resentment, or we could attempt to live so as never to do such a thing again. In the last instance, we continue to be an agent within history. Self-loathing is a

luxury that agents of history cannot afford. On a national scale, such a resolution toward a better future is a political decision. In liberal democracy, this means using democratic institutions and procedures to conciliate various needs, and thereby widen the range of consensus about how things are. In liberal democracies, people get things done by compromising in order to form alliances with groups about whom you have grave doubts. The political Left and the political Right have accomplished much in America by doing that.

The modern democratic, pluralist, secular, political state is not just a set of institutions. It represents regard for the worth and dignity of individuals in such a way that each individual may pursue his or her best plan of life. It represents the ideas of liberty, pluralism, and justice. Patriotism toward this kind of government is how we internalize the common good toward which the government strives. We participate in the public discussion of political affairs, pay taxes, and serve in the military. We identify with the common ends of the social world as embodied in the modern political state – in particular, its promotion of freedom.

People do not always exercise power for the sake of domination. People also exercise power as acting in concert, acting together, as a consensus. Power can operate in the realm of inter-subjectivity and common action. Together people have a capacity for power that they would not otherwise have. This exercise of power supposes common understandings between the partners engaged in dialogue. As we actualize ourselves as individuals and as social members, we experience community at more profound levels than we may know consciously or intentionally.

War presupposes peace; it does not represent the first event of the encounter. The status of the human implies fraternity and the idea of the human race. Human fraternity has two aspects. First, it involves individualities whose logical status is not reducible to the status of ultimate differences in a genus, for their singularity consists in each referring to itself. Second, it also involves the commonness of a Father, as though the commonness of race would not bring together enough. Society must be a fraternal community to be commensurate with the straightforwardness in which the face of the other presents itself to my welcome.

Further, the international situation with independent and competing nations remains a dangerous place. Intellectuals have long had the dream that the various nations could abide by certain principles. We have not yet discovered principles, consistent with human nature, to bring peace and justice between nations, outside of encouraging every nation to become a liberal democracy. We justly ridicule the utopian hopes for a world government or league of peoples that will bring perpetual peace, along with the moral improvement of the entire human race. We can achieve world peace, but only as individual governments respect the rights of their citizens and institute participatory democracy.

The advent of the modern political state has brought the horrors of war on a massive scale. War is a normal feature of the modern political state, for it is a permanent part of human existence. The principle of pluralism and self-determination dismisses the idea that a world state could prevent the outbreak of war. Individual states and movements will always have the possibility of using their freedom to resolve disputes violently. The plurality of national peoples in whom the human desire for worth and

dignity has actualized itself precludes the existence of a true world state. Individual states actualize themselves by distinguishing themselves from each other and attain recognition as to their independent status in relation to each other. Nations face each other as sovereign powers with no higher power between them capable of enforcing the peaceful settlement.

The possibility of war arises out of the natural course of international relations. War is a failure of human social life. Each nation has its separate and particular interests that will conflict with those of other states. Contingencies will arise that lead to war. War has a way of uniting citizens involved separately in their private interests toward their common citizenship in a nation. Such external threats bring a people together. The reality of their shared life becomes clear. It becomes something for which they will fight. The social bond of a people, often not perceived in time of peace, becomes clear when others attack their nation. From a somewhat pessimistic perspective, history may suggest that war appears necessary to maintain the internal life of the state. However, this would not consider the possibility of that one day, the people of every nation will live in a nation that respects their right to form their basic plan of life.

War is not good. It is not, however, an absolute evil. War is an evil with which we can and must live. The good of preserving individual freedom, family, free association in civil life, and political freedom transcends the relative evil of war. We cannot preserve the benefits of freedom in any other way.

I have immense respect for the pacifist position of groups like the Amish. They refuse to participate in what I perceive to be the benefits of liberal democracy. They also refuse to defend a society in which they do not participate and which they reject.

The story of Dan and Laish in Judges 18 educates us in a graphic way about the realities of the world.

> Judges 18:7-10 (NRSV)
> [7] The five men went on, and when they came to Laish, they observed the people who were there living securely, after the manner of the Sidonians, quiet and unsuspecting, lacking nothing on earth, and possessing wealth. Furthermore, they were far from the Sidonians and had no dealings with Aram. [8] When they came to their kinsfolk at Zorah and Eshtaol, they said to them, "What do you report?" [9] They said, "Come, let us go up against them; for we have seen the land, and it is very good. Will you do nothing? Do not be slow to go, but enter in and possess the land. [10] When you go, you will come to an unsuspecting people. The land is broad—God has indeed given it into your hands—a place where there is no lack of anything on earth."

From my perspective, this story illustrates that the aggressive use of force determines world-historical matters. Dan could have decided that since Laish set a good example of peace, quietness, and reasonable wealth, and that it could learn from them and peacefully reside together as neighbors. However, the aggressor sets the terms of engagement. When the opponent, in this text the tribe of Dan, determines that it wants your land, and that it willingly uses force to attain it, the peaceful tribe of Laish had the option of having been prepared to defend their land or to hand it over to their opponents. What happened to Laish will happen to any nation that adopts the principle of nonviolence as a national strategy.

Non-violence is not a good strategy unless it is effective in accomplishing a worthy end. Let us suppose for the moment genuineness in being against any violence individually and on the part of a nation. The aim of such a position is a world of peace. What I suggest is that nonviolence, understood as an absolute moral principle, is not

effective in accomplishing the aim of peace. In the end, it results in the victory of oppressive dictatorships.

Does violence ever solve world-historical problems? Clearly, the answer is yes. The American Revolution gave birth to a nation free of colonial rule and with a focus on individual rights. The civil war removed the horrendous practice of human slavery and the denial of individual rights to persons because of the color of skin. World War I helped end the violence of colonialism. World War II ended the Nazi terror in Europe. The Cold War ended the terror that the Soviet Communist perpetrated upon the world. The objection to the Vietnam War had a moral purpose. One could object to that war while still maintaining that the fight against the expansion of Soviet communism had a moral purpose. When liberal democracies use violence for a moral purpose, and do so as a last resort in that the enemy allows no other course of action, they help advance humanity toward civilizations that respect the worth and dignity of individuals. In such situations, war becomes a great act of love for neighbors who cannot defend themselves against the force of a dictator or other violent leaders. Defending those who cannot defend themselves is an act of love and justice.

Let us consider the possibility that the principle of nonviolence is not a genuine strategy for a peaceful world. Let us consider the possibility that for some individuals and groups, the objective is the downfall of liberal democracies in general and the United States in particular. Let us consider the possibility that the United States is a target of those who desire the creation of chaos and barbarity so that, out of the ashes of modern civilization, will arise a new order, generally a communist one. In such cases, the target

of the principle of nonviolence is not peace, but the downfall of the social world called democracy and the downfall of America.

The principle of nonviolence that many persons on the political Left suggest is hypocritical. Such persons participate in the benefits of modern society. They experience the freedom, they enjoy the economic benefits, they raise families and have jobs, and so on. They enjoy these benefits through the willingness of others to fight for their country.

What I propose is that the principle of nonviolence is not a moral absolute in the *human* world. I will grant that, if there is a heaven, nonviolence will be the order of the day. In a *human* world, we must discern the proper moral uses of violence. In the real world of *human* choice, the act of killing an intruder into one's home is not morally equivalent to the killing that the intruder would bring if not stopped. On the world scene, the violence perpetrated by the dropping of atomic bombs to end World War II, combined with the agony that Harry Truman went through to make that decision, is not morally equivalent to either the violence of the Japanese empire or the cool order by Hitler to slaughter more Jews in concentration camps. The violence had a moral purpose. I trust that the result for both Japan and Germany in the years since World War II demonstrate this fact to any open-minded person. War is a plague upon humanity. However, we also need to consider the plague in prevents. If we assume the basic goodness of people, war is always wrong. However, when we recognize the presence of evil, we understand that war becomes a last option. People need as much commitment to freedom and justice as we do to peace.

My own suggestion is that liberal democracies need to have a league of nations of their own to improve their relationships and the practice of liberal democracy. The failure

of the historical League of Nations and the United Nations to provide collective security is the result of its failure not to abide by Immanuel Kant's recommendation that such organizations acknowledge the moral superiority of liberal democracy to other forms of organizing their social world. What liberal democracies do not need is military dictatorships and communist states within the United Nations telling them what to do. If any kind of world government arises, it can only be through the principles of respect for the rights of individuals. So far, the only states that do so are liberal democracies.

The end of the Cold War has raised another question. Does the end of the Cold War mean that the United States should relinquish its power so that humanity moves from a uni-polar world to a multi-polar world? I hear this question from the United Nations as a whole, as well as France and Germany in particular. I also hear the question from some Americans who fear that that the amount of power America has will corrupt it. Such fears are valid only if America stops seeking the actualization of the ideal of valuing individuals and their worth and dignity. Frankly, the fact that the United States, in all of its relative youthfulness, remains the sole superpower in the world is one that should give the world great hope and comfort. What would the world be like if the old Soviet Union had this kind of power? The problem is not the fact of one nation possessing this much power, but the moral problem of how to use of it. That moral problem faces American leaders at both political and economic levels. Generally, Americans are far from self-righteous about their country – most have a lover's quarrel with it. Americans reluctantly go to war and reluctantly use their massive weapons.

Does the United States need to moderate national sovereignty and increase global loyalty? It sounds reasonable and even sounds like a humble thing to do. However, have

you considered that such a proposition assumes the moral equality of all social worlds? Would you want representatives from Libya judging American action in the world? What moral basis would such military dictatorship have in judging what the United States does, given what they have done to achieve power and to keep power? I invite you to consider what military dictatorships do to the citizens within their countries, and then tell me how you can agree that such leaders have any right to sit in judgment of the United States.

I hope you will agree with me that the assumption of the equality of all social worlds is not one with which those living in liberal democracies can hold. We must not pretend the moral equality of all social worlds. We need to have confidence in the nobility that democratic institutions and freedom brings to any country.

Moral confusion leads some thinkers to propose that the United Nations is similar to the Articles of Confederation. The difference is that each of the states that accepted the Articles of Confederation accepted liberal democracy. The United Nations is an organization that includes brutal regimes and dictators who need to pass from the scene of world history. The call to submit to organizations within the United Nations is a call for the justification of our actions on the world stage to brutal dictatorships. For a liberal democracy to surrender sovereignty, even in a world facing the possibility of nuclear confrontation, would be a truly immoral act against its own citizens. Only the United States can judge the justice of its own cause, because this nation has experienced the value of the social world called liberal democracy. No military dictatorship has the right to judge what the best interest of any liberal democracy is. Military dictatorships do not have valid interests, for they do not stand upon respect for the individuals that live within them. Although the United Nations may provide a place for all nations to talk, the illusion

that its existence creates of equality among the social worlds represented in it is hardly helpful.

For this reason, the World Court at The Hague should not abrogate domestic law, contrary to the advice in The Book of Resolutions #309, which affirms United Methodist support for the International Criminal Court.

For this reason, the peacekeeping forces of the United Nations must remain small, while the United States continues to have the strongest military in the world.

For this reason, an international police force is not an option for liberal democracies.

For this reason, an international income tax that supports the agencies of the United Nations is preposterous in that it supports military and communist dictatorships in the oppression of their people.

Jesus once said, “Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called children of God."8

First, I think our nation and the church itself needs to be honest about its own failing, weakness, and sin. In a war, it is easy to claim that evil resides in the enemy, and that our church and our nation have escaped the influence of evil. We live in an imperfect nation and we are part of an imperfect church. We value freedom for all, and yet in our history have denied freedom to women and African-Americans. We value justice, and yet have had to deal with our own biases in reference to race and gender. We value peace, and yet have involved ourselves in wars that clearly were unjust. I reflect here upon wars such as the Indian wars and the Mexican-American wars, which at least from what I read

8 Matthew 5:9

were not America at its best. We might include, with more debate, the Vietnam War in that list. We value goodness, and yet we have our obvious moral failings in the misuse of our freedom. We are not angels or demons. Those whom we fight in this war are not angels or demons. We are human beings who help shape a nation every time we go to work, raise families, spend our money, volunteer in our community, and vote for leaders. We even run for office.

Second, I think we need to realize that some people will not live in peace with others. Some people will not allow us to embrace them in friendship. We need to do our part in the ministry of the church to model the embracing love of God to the world. That love is inclusive of all persons even those to whom society attaches some stigma. Realistically, however, we need to consider that some persons will not allow us to embrace them. This fact should not surprise us. The love of God embraces all persons. Yet, not all people experience the blessing of that embrace because they do not turn toward God and receive that embrace. On a national scale, I think our nation desires peace with all nations. Sometimes peace comes after we defeat governments who do not want to live peacefully with others. We learned this in World War II, as our nation defeated the Japanese Empire and Nazi Germany.

Third, I think that Christianity has already exerted its influence anytime this nation goes to war. You see, in its better moments, the church urges the leaders of a nation not to provoke war with another nation. War is the last option. We act primarily for self-defense and sometimes, as in Bosnia, for humanitarian purposes. We use a minimum amount of force. If you listen carefully to the plans for war, America will do everything it can to avoid civilian causalities. The Christian concern for individual life

brings us toward that moral decision. We do not set up an empire and impose our will upon others. If you doubt that, witness the behavior of the French and Germans, whom we liberated in the 1940's, and who now express themselves against American policy. Such an approach is the opposite of the terrorists, who hide in civilian neighborhoods and target malls, buses, and other civilian meeting places.

Fourth, I think some Americans need to recover a genuine love of country. Of course, I do not mean our nation is perfect. The church is not perfect either. Do you love the church of Jesus Christ, even as you recognize its faults? Do you love yourself, in spite of all your faults? Even if we have done horrendous things in our past, the hope of the gospel is that people can repent, receive forgiveness, and move on to a new life. Yet, both church and nation consist of human beings and therefore we will have plenty of reason to find fault. One reason we can be so discouraged is that our nation has set such lofty ideals that it is easy for us to fall short. When a regime such as Nazi Germany slaughters millions of people, it simply fulfills its horrendous mission. When the United States falls short of its ideals, a certain tragedy occurs. Yet, just as we forgive others and ourselves, maybe we can find a way to forgive our nation as it corrects such past actions and sets a new course.

When do we become anti-American? I have come to think the answer is simpler than we might think. If we think that America is the primary threat to peace and justice in the world, we have crossed the line. We have become anti-American. The world has terrorists willing to blow up trade towers. The world has terrorists who act in cowardly ways, hiding among civilians and killing unarmed civilians. The world has military dictators who have murdered to get to their positions, terrorize to stay there, and seek

weapons of mass destruction in order to expand their power. Such groups also know that the United States is the greatest threat to their violent way of life. The United States has to do no more than respect individuals to become such a target. The thought that if the United States lay down its military might it would cease to be such a target is utopian.

I have been quite direct and blunt on this point. You see, I have confidence in a possible world. I think that one day every person in the world will live in a nation that respects his or her rights, worth, and dignity. They will have the right to pursue their basic plan of life. If that day comes, it will be because the United States discerns the proper and moral use of its power. That power includes both soft power of its free culture and economic life, as well as its military power.

Every human life matters to God. Comparing how many people die in certain situations is hardly helpful, for one death that arises out of sinfulness is an offense to God.

I would find it helpful if the church itself would practice peacefulness. I do not find it credible that the church, supposedly a place of peace, recommends the use of coercion to take from one group in society and give to another. Considering that there are ways in modern society for churches to advance their concerns peacefully, persuasively, and voluntarily in civil society, the use of coercion through public policy hardly seems in the spirit of prophets, Jesus, or apostles. The point is that the use of coercion – if you do not pay taxes, you will go to jail – is not appropriate use of the government as general principle, let alone in the hands of those who honor the crucified one. Of course, some government action is necessary on behalf of those alienated from the economic and political benefits of modern society. I find it rather incredible that those churches with the

largest denominational budgets call for government to do so many things for the poor, while at the same time spending their money on salaries and buildings for denominational executives. The church needs to model the peacefulness about which it talks. Becoming another special interest group, sitting at the table with those in power, and seeking to gain a measure of power through political victory, somehow does seem fitting for the church of Jesus Christ.

Jim Winkler, general secretary of the United Methodist Board of Church and Society, suggested that the view that any justification of war is a false gospel and of fleeting popularity. “The invasion of Iraq is wrong. It is unjust, unnecessary and too uncertain. I write those words with the full confidence that Jesus Christ would assert the same.” (May/June 2003) The bishops of the United Methodist Church, in their November 9, 2001 pastoral letter, state, “Violence in all its forms and expressions is contrary to God’s purpose for the world. Violence creates fear, desperation, hopelessness and instability.” Such absolute moral positions do not help to advance genuine discernment of the will of God. I find discernment of the will of God far more difficult than Mr. Winkler and the bishops suggests. I may not be as close to God as either Mr. Winkler or the Bishops, for I find that I do not have that much certainty about many things. Another way to look at this is to reflect on the level of arrogance to which one must ascend to be at a place where one can make such pronouncements. Further, they neglect Par. 164 G, in which the United Methodist Church recognizes occasions when peaceful alternatives fail, and force becomes necessary. The failure to recognize that some violence ends fear, desperation, hopelessness, and instability does not appear to enter into the discussion.

The matter of pacifism raises many questions concerning the normative nature of the New Testament as well as the practical and pastoral matter of ministering in a culture that respects the church enough to allow it to worship and serve freely. Many Christians in modern culture appear to have little thankfulness for living in such culture. We would do well to pause and consider the many Christians who lived in cultures that persecuted them, killed them, and shunned them. We take so much for granted.

Further, we need to consider that modernity has created a social world in which people like Socrates, Jesus, the first martyr Stephen, Paul, Peter, and many others, the state would not execute for what they said and did. As we look at the world at the beginning of the 21st century, we need to realize how rare of a gift this is for the government to offer its people.

Next, we need to realize that we will have a peaceful and just world when every nation has respect for the rights of their citizens and defends those rights. When dictators invade other countries, they do to others what they have already done to their people.

On a personal level, stopping someone from doing violence to oneself may have the effect of stopping future violence by that person to others. Some vocations of modern life involve one in complex situations, such as police and fire fighters, as well as soldiers, which require discerning Christian involvement.

On a national scale, the recognition that some political leaders embody violence to such a degree that love for one's neighbor calls one to act in their defense and thereby lessen the expansion of evil is an important possibility for consideration.

To complicate matters further, one needs some discernment as to the form of life embedded in a culture that one defends. In a brutal military dictatorship, non-resistance

may well be the courageous act. In a culture that values individuals and freedom, non-resistance on a national scale may well mean the expansion of violence and evil. The point here is that one cannot responsibly apply any teaching of the New Testament, including that of Jesus, without carefully discerning the normative value of the text.

Israel amid Arab Lands

Religion is doing harm is in the Middle East, and in particular with the Jewish, Islam, and Christian conflict. Jews feel oppressed by their neighbors, and are suspicious of the European community. Palestinians cannot have the rights of full citizenship in Israel, for Jews justly look upon them with suspicion. Palestinians experience oppression by the Jewish state. Yet, we who live so far away must examine the relationship between Palestinians and Jews in the larger context of the Middle East. The Islamic world in the Middle East perpetuates an anti-Jewish sentiment among their people that would make Hitler proud. The Palestinian Liberation Organization and many Islamic countries call for the destruction of the state of Israel. Those who live in liberal democracies need to look honestly at how all too many Arab governments treat their citizens, whether in Iraq, Iran, Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Saudi Arabia, or the PLO. If Jews in Israel are paranoid, it is for good reason. If such countries cannot treat their citizens as bearers of individual rights and as persons of worth and dignity, how can we possibly hope that they would treat the Jewish people or the American people with worth and dignity? Their own Moslem brothers further oppress Palestinians and sisters in that they are rich in oil money, yet those funds do not flow to the Palestinians in order to relieve their plight.

Many American liberals have begun to analyze the situation in the Middle East from a Marxist critique that Israel is oppressor and Palestinians are the oppressed. To

make this analysis is to decide beforehand the outcome of any discussion and to make reconciliation impossible. A Marxist critique can end only in alienation and the perceived moral superiority of one cause over another. The failure to see that both Palestinians and Jews are the recipients of oppression is to fail to enter into the moral ambiguities that exist in the region. The failure to see that the governments who rule Arabs oppress their citizens ought to suggest the value of negotiated agreements with them. It also ought to suggest what they would do to the Jewish people in Israel if given the opportunity.

Given these realities, it will take great courage from secular rulers to teach religion in the Middle East to have a different role than it does now. Religion does not have the capacity within itself to adopt a humble role in society. It will require secular leaders with great courage to teach religion its proper place in political life. As an aside, the same is true in economics, for religion typically cares more for eternity than it does for this moment in time. Religion does not have the tools to improve the material conditions of people; that can only come from good economics, science, and technology. In any case, it will take a leader of the PLO who will take strong action against groups like the Islamic Jihad. It will take a Jewish leader who will keep Orthodox Judaism in its place. Whether such strength can arise in the present situation is questionable, for it will mean taking a strong stand against many of one's own people. Although many Americans seem to think that the United States has a role here, I am not convinced. If the people who share this geographical territory do not want peace, I do not see how the United States can impose it. Given the current hatred of the United States among many Arabs, American troops in the region would not be something I want to see.

One of the major issues that exist in the background of any discussion of these religions is the crusades. Jews and Muslims have a right not to forget this history.

Pope Urban II in 1094 called for the removal from Europe of its Muslim invaders. His vision unleashed more than he thought. He did not anticipate mobs. The crusaders kill Jews in Europe. Many people in Europe are afraid of them. The first crusade, the Peasant's Crusaders, was a failure. The second crusade in 1096, once they are past Constantinople, enemies in Turkey surround them. They will attack Jerusalem. The crusades unify Western Europe, establish trade routes, bring wealth to the church, and new forms of taxation. Such "good" came at great cost. The Fourth Crusade was in 1202. Jerusalem was lost to the Muslims. Innocent III wants to re-take the city. In the end, these crusaders sacked Constantinople. The Pope excommunicated the participants. The result was that Moscow became a third, and it believed, last, Rome. It became the center of Orthodox Church.

Christians might unite against a common enemy, the Turks and Islam. It appeared the Turks would run over Europe. Some were attracted to adventure and to knight-hood. The knight had a job to do, going to battle, and do it well. With the first crusade, Europe was in poverty and infested with plague. They wanted to re-gain the Holy Land. They believed God willed it. St. Francis rejected the crusading spirit. The church got wealthy. It was a disaster for the economy of Europe. By the fourth crusade, eastern and western Christians fought each other. They justified the use of war. Monastic orders like the Order of Knights of Malta combined militarism and piety. After 200 years and thousands of live, they ended with a whimper. – This period has caused many continuing problems

today. In particular, how do we balance firm commitment to the truth of our faith on the one hand and compulsion on the other?

The Crusades, especially the Fourth, embittered the Greeks so much that any real reunion of the Eastern and Western churches was out of the question. Nonetheless, certain groups of Eastern Christians came to recognize the authority of the pope. Rome usually permitted them to retain the use of their native liturgies. Although the majority of the missions that grew out of the Crusades collapsed with the advance of the Ottoman Turks in the Middle East in the mid-14th century, some of the contacts that the Western Church had made with its Eastern brethren remained.

The association of missions with Crusades posed a moral theological problem that troubled medieval thinkers. Thirteenth-century theologians held that the church could not force conversion, but most agreed that the church could use force to preserve a situation in which peaceful propaganda was possible, and they continued to support the Crusade. Furthermore, Europe's fear of Muslim power was such that the Crusade idea persisted well into the 17th century, and the conviction that, in certain circumstances, war might be just became more deeply enrooted in the conscience of the West. Along with the now generally accepted use of the word crusade to denote any common endeavor in a worthy cause, this is one of the most enduring results of the movement.

Unlike Sicily and Spain, the Latin East did not provide, it seems, an avenue for the transmission of Arabic science and philosophy to the West. However, the Crusades did have a marked impact on the development of Western historical literature. From the beginning, there was a proliferation of chronicles, eyewitness accounts, and later more ambitious histories, in verse and in prose, in the vernacular as well as in Latin.

Present readers should not view the Crusades too exclusively in terms of cause and effect. If they sometimes contributed to changes in the West, so also those changes affected them. Rather, historians consider the Crusades and the Latin Kingdom as an integral part of the diversified culture of Europe in the Middle Ages.

The entire structure of European society changed during 1095-1291, and there was a time when historians attributed it largely to the Crusades. Historians now, however, tend to view the Crusades as only a significant factor in Europe's development. It is probable, for example, that the departure of unruly elements on the First Crusade aided the King of France and the great feudatories in preserving order and extending their authority. It is also likely that the disappearance of old families and the appearance of new ones historians can trace to the Crusades, but historians must generalize with caution. Present readers must remember that, while some crusaders sold or mortgaged their property, usually to ecclesiastical foundations, others made it over to relatives. The loss of life was without doubt considerable; many, however, did return to their homes.

The sectors acquired by burgeoning Italian cities in the crusader states enabled them to extend their trade with the Muslim world and led to the establishment of trade depots beyond the Crusade frontiers, some of which lasted well beyond 1291. The transportation they provided was significant in the development of shipbuilding techniques. Italian banking facilities became indispensable to popes and kings. Catalans and Provençals also profited, and, indirectly, so did all of Europe. Moreover, returning crusaders brought new tastes or increased the demand for spices, Oriental textiles, and other exotic fare. However, such demands historians can also attribute to changing life-styles and commercial growth in Europe itself.

The papacy launched the First Crusade, and Crusades remained a constant concern. While initial success undoubtedly served to enhance papal prestige, later failures had the opposite effect, and the diversion of Crusade propaganda to war against heretics or the emperor only served to arouse criticism. So also did the levies on clerical incomes, though historians note that papal Crusade financing played an important role in Europe's economic development.

The establishment of the Franciscan and Dominican friars in the East during the 13th century made possible the promotion of missions within the Crusade area and beyond. Papal bulls granted special facilities to missionary friars, and popes sent letters to Oriental rulers soliciting permission for the friars to carry on their work. Often the friars accompanied or followed Italian merchants, and, since the Mongols were generally tolerant of religious propaganda, missionary orders established themselves in Iran, Inner Asia, and even China. However, since Islamic law rigidly prohibited propaganda and punished apostasy with death, conversions from Islam were few. The Dominican William of Tripoli had some success, presumably within the crusaders' area; he and his colleague, Ricoldus of Montecroce, both wrote perceptive treatises on Islamic faith and law. Other missionaries usually failed, and many suffered martyrdom. In the 14th century, Islam finally permitted the Franciscans to reside in Palestine as caretakers for the holy places, but not as missionaries.

Among my many concerns is the renewal of anti-Judaism in Europe and in the United States. I hear it the way in which people use the word "Jew." I notice it in the Nazi type of propaganda in the Arab world about Jews. I notice it the European opposition to American support of Israel that has a strong anti-Jewish tinge to its argument. Our

memories are so short. The atrocities committed against Jewish people in "Christian" Europe are open for all to read about and, I hope, lament. The anti-Judaism within the United States is still a matter of concern. We have forgotten the lessons of the Holocaust already. From this writer's perspective, Christians "owe" the Jewish people in a large way. Christians are not close to paying that debt.

The cynic will say that Jews and Muslims have been fighting for so long it will never stop. The position papers of Christians for Peace and Justice in the Middle East claim to avoid simple black-white analysis, while still recognizing that Israel is the aggressor and as the occupying nation does have major responsibilities to resolve the conflict. My question is whether it is possible to declare Israel the aggressor and not have a simplistic analysis. Looking backward, one has to question the wisdom of placing a Jewish state in an area where Arab nations that supported Nazi Germany in World War II would surround them.

From my perspective, the United Methodist Church often words stories about these tensions with an eye toward the Palestinian side. On example, is an article by Paul Jeffrey for UMNS. He notes that “Despite efforts by the international community to push the road map for peace, Palestinians still face travel restrictions, unemployment, hunger and daily struggles under Israeli occupation. Yet they also can count on support from ACT members …” In delivering supplies to one Palestinian area, he comments: “The convoy … faced down Israeli tanks to deliver the emergency supplies.” The problem with accounts like this is that the article does not refer to the failure of Palestinian leadership to fulfill its part of the roadmap or hold them accountable for that failure. The denial of the right of the Jewish people to be in that area, the failure to recognize the right of Israel

to exist as a Jewish and democratic state, the support from Arab countries for homicide bombers, and the way terrorists hide among non-combatants and target non-combatants as a strategy to get their way, remain roadblocks to peace.

Jewish interest in Jerusalem and a state in this area arose because of European nationalism in the 1800's. Zionism was the movement that embodied this desire of Jewish people for political state. Jews have had a presence in the land for as long as we have any record of census. Although European anti-Semitism encouraged Jews to seek a new home, it was not the cause.

Here is the light at the end of the tunnel. This proposal has been on the table. President Bush now has what he calls a Quartet Roadmap to peace in the Middle East. This peace results from the involvement of the United States, the European Union, Russia, and the United Nations. Here is the basic outline.

First, justice and peace means two independent states living in peace and cooperation. This requires Palestinian recognition of the right of Israel to exist. It also requires cessation of violence against Israel. It also requires the support of Israel for an independent Palestinian state and cessation of violent action by Israel against Palestine. Yossi Alpher says that he sees little possibility for improvement in the near future in the region. He says that the two state solution needs to work within the next ten years, or it will be dead. Both sides are worse off. The economy is worse, especially for Palestinians. Force on both sides has proven ineffective for dealing with difference. It has become an increasingly dirty war. Palestinian terrorists have placed themselves on the other side of civilization. The only happy ones are those on both sides who oppose the two state

solution. The difficulties with the two-state solution are that settlements continue to spread and Arabs are in Israel.

Second, peace and justice means that Jerusalem is the capitol of both states. Yossi also referred to Jerusalem. The proposal of a synagogue on the Temple Mount was meant to sell the Orthodox Jews on accommodation. Among the many difficulties is that Arafat, along with many other Arabs, did not believe the Jews ever had a temple on the Temple Mount. Clinton proposed one city and two capitols. The United Methodist Book of Resolutions #312 agrees with the vision of a shared Jerusalem as a city of peace and reconciliation. Peaceful resolution of the status of Jerusalem is crucial to the success of a process that moves the area toward justice and peace. A fence runs through Jerusalem. It does help with security. It also adds to human suffering. Israel needs recognition of its historical Jewish roots in the area. Jews have always been in the area, and in particular, around Jerusalem.

Resolution #312 goes on to say that it seeks and end "to military occupation freedom from violence, and full respect for the human rights of all under international law." The resolution goes on to condemns Israeli construction of settlements and establishing curfews and other hindrances to social interaction. It condemns suicide bombings by both sides. It points out that the United States supplies Israel with billions of dollars of aid. The United Methodist Church itself advocates on behalf of the rights for Palestinian self-determination and an end to Israeli occupation. It also affirms, without recognizing the paradox, the right of Israel to exist and the right of return for Palestinian refugees. It urges both sides to stop human rights violations and attacks on civilians, not mentioning that Arab terrorists hide among civilians. The resolution calls for the an arms

embargo by the United States of the whole area, a solution that would, paradoxically, wed the area to other countries, including Russian, China, and probably France. It expresses United Methodist opposition to military occupation by Israel of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem, the confiscation of Palestinian land and water resources, and the destruction of Palestinian homes. It opposes any vision of "Great Israel" by the Jewish people in the area. It also urges dismantling of the segment of the Wall of Separation constructed since May 2002. It urges condemnation of any Palestinian violence against Israeli citizens. It specifically urges protection of both Israeli and Arab individuals who urge non-violence, a subtle recognition that non-violence is not absolute principle. Those who practice non-violence need the protection of people who do not share their position. Specifically, in Book of Resolutions 323, the United Methodist Church supports Resolutions 242 and 338 for a just lasting peace. Security Council Resolution 242, passed in 1967, calls for Israel to withdraw from land occupied in the 1967 war. It also calls for recognition of national boundaries by all parties. It desires peaceful passage through international waterways. It wants a "just settlement" of the refugee problem. Security Council Resolution 338, passed in 1973, calls for cease fire of the present conflict, all parties to implement resolution 242, and that all talks have as their aim a just and lasting peace.

Third, the Quartet roadmap also encourages Palestinian security apparatus and action against terrorism by Palestinian government. Israel would withdraw to September 23, 2000 position, as security performance improves. The roadmap also encourages a constitution that respects the rights of all persons and elections. It provides opportunity for judicial, financial, and administrative reforms.

Fourth, the plan calls for evacuation of Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza. The settlements have the purpose of making it impossible to create a Palestinian State. Approximately 200,000 Jews live around the part of Jerusalem that most Palestinians will accept as in the Jewish State. Israel must dismantle the rest of the settlements, meaning 6-7,000 in Gaza and 200 other settlements in the West Bank. Peace in the area is unlikely without this concession by Israel. Yossi considers "the wall" or fence as a small ray of light. Source of hope built on the green line. The green line is the armistice between Palestine and Gaza on the one hand and Israel on the other. It is a way to protect the citizens of Israel from homicide bombers. It can reduce terror and de-legitimize settlements. Israel will never accept right of return of the Palestinians to Israel. Many Palestinians have the key to the house or piece of paper from the home that they left in 1947 or in 1967. That dream has evaporated in the minds of most Palestinians. Peace in the area is unlikely without this concession by Palestinians. Most would not want to go back. Jews will not agree to become a minority in their own state. "Deal" is to offer generous compensation within Holy Land or in other lands. One could accomplish such a deal with good will. Yossi refers to the status of the Saudi Plan. It refers to resolution 194 of UN Assembly, code for the right of return. They did not follow up with the plan. This left the impression in Israel that the Saudi's wanted to gain favor with USA after 9/11/01.

According to Yossi Alpher, the strategic position of Israel has recently improved. The likelihood of conventional war is less. The destruction of the homes of terrorists has some success, but long term it continues discontent. The commitment of the USA to stop terrorism aids the efforts of Israel. However, Bush chose not to apply pressure to destroy

infrastructure of terror by Arafat and pressure Israel concerning settlements. He referred to Security Council Resolution 242 in 1967 as providing the context for the peace with Jordan and Egypt.

Yossi suggests that American Christians can support Israel strategically, recognizing that this is a Jewish democratic state. However, Israel and Palestine need to work out their relationship. Christians also need to have a discerning attitude toward settlements. Evangelical and fundamental Christians finance the effort to blow up the mosque on Temple Mount. A minority of Israel is involved in this kind of effort.

Yossi suggests the moderate Palestinian is jealous of American support, wants an even-handed approach that focuses on settlements, and wants more money from America. Moderate Palestinians do not have a good answer as to why they cannot stop the violence.

How widely do people share the vision of the Quartet Roadmap? About 20% on both sides would reject such a settlement, such as Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and so on. Some Jews offer Arabs second-class citizenship, which would be better than they would have in Syria or Iraq. Now, although he viewed this as a sign of hope, what would happen if 20% of the United States wanted war with Canada, and did not care what it took to make war?

Boling believes that only external intervention will get the area to this place. In his case, he believes it will require American intervention.

One area of concern I have is that of the Arab states that surround Israel. We appear to expect nations like Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Iran to respect the right of Israel to exist. However, the governments of those countries do not respect the right of their citizens to exist. Most of these leaders oppress women, stifle dissent, and oppress

Christians. These governments torture, imprison, and murder political opponents in order to stay in power. My puzzlement is this: How can we expect these types of governments to respect the right of Israel to exist? How can we expect Israel to trust them? My suspicion is that peace in the area awaits a change in the systems of government among the Arab people. These governments need to come into modern civilization, where the worth and dignity of citizens receives recognition by government.

Such a concern leads into another question of the social world in which most Arabs live. Fundamentalist Islam does not lend itself to constitutionally protected rights of individuals or genuine democracy that protects the rights of minorities. Military dictatorships take themselves seriously, in a way that the American government does not. Thus, I have heard people at seminars call George W. Bush another Hitler. Yet, I find them at the next seminar, not yet in jail or dead. Such comments betray deep-seated ignorance and stupidity, which I doubt, or deep-seated and irrational hatred. The fact that people freely demonstrate against the policy of the government reminds us of the vast difference between the social world of America and the social world of military dictatorships. The latter cannot stand scrutiny, dissent, or even jokes about its leaders. The challenge we have is that the social world of the Arab people needs to change toward toleration, humanitarianism, respect for the rights of individuals, and democratic institutions. Without such a change, peace is unlikely.

The war in Iraq demonstrated the military might of the United States. Some Americans seem uncomfortable with this power. Some Americans assume that the world needs a balance to American power. However, this position assumes that America has evil intent in the use of power. I cannot get inside the kind of mind it would take to be in

that place intellectually. The only way to balance American military power is to reduce its power to that of, say, North Korea or China, or to increase the military power of such nations. I wonder if such Americans truly think the world would be a better place if such world-historical realities existence. American history suggests that the United States does not build empires. It will act to protect its long-term interests in liberty. Through their government, Americans recognize genuine threats to liberty. America also has a virtue tradition, shaped through Christian traditions, which limit the use of force for moral purpose. One could point to many times when America did not use force for a moral purpose, such as Indian Wars, slavery, Spanish-American War, Vietnam, and CIA involvements. However, few would deny that the war for its independence, WWI, WWII, and the Cold War had a moral purpose. Few would deny that America did not use its power to build empire in these cases. Many people involved in these dialogues opposed the war in Iraq. At the same time, they admit that American victory has changed the equation in the Middle East in positive direction. In particular, the possibility that surrounding Arab states will no longer provide safe haven for terrorist organizations has increased. Maybe they need to admit they were wrong in opposing the war in Iraq. However, this would mean they would have to say that George Bush was right. They will never do this, for their hatred of him is deep.

The war in Iraq and the conflict in the Middle East have driven a wedge between the United States and its allies on the one hand, and France and Germany and their allies on the other. Many of the people engaged in this dialogue assume that the United States is responsible for dividing democracies. My puzzlement is this. Could we not as easily assume that France and Germany bear equal responsibility? The democracies have a

genuine disagreement. The European Union is the greatest source of financial backing for the Palestinian Authority of Arafat. The United States is the greatest backer of Israel. From what I read, anti-Semitism has spread in Europe, largely because of such a large Arab population in these countries, and especially in France. The point is that the United States differs with some in the European Union. Yet, these democracies will not conduct violent acts toward each other, although citizens may take action by not purchasing products from respective countries. I do not find the assumption that America must be wrong helpful in this discussion.

Some people question the motive of President Bush in making his proposal on June 24, 2002. I do not find such suspicions helpful. If we take the text seriously, we must assume that the administration backs the above plan. Further, after the determination Bush showed in the Iraq war, I do not understand how anyone can deny that Bush follows through on what he says.

Can two states exist side-by-side in peace, one Jewish and the other Palestinian? Two trends move against it. One is that many who say the want a just peace actually have a Marxist analysis of the situation. Their position simplifies the situation into one of Israel oppressing Palestinians. I do not find Marxist analysis helpful in bringing opposing interests to a place of reconciliation. By its nature, Marxist analysis is an alienating critique. Analysis begins recognizing that both Israel and Palestinians experience oppression, and both oppress. Arab states oppress Palestinians by not sharing their oil wealth. They oppress Israel by funding and providing safe haven for terrorist organizations. Israel responds out of a genuine fear (not paranoia) that others want them dead. Good and evil do reside in both positions. I will give the hopeful and positive

answer, recognizing that the road to that peaceful place will be a rough one. From a humanist perspective, Jews, Christians, and Muslims should be able to live together in peace. This view recognizes the worth and dignity of every individual, the value of diversity, and the value of tolerance. Unfortunately, the area is not ready for such a truly radical solution, a solution that most Americans have found quite sound. The move toward two states living peacefully together is a worthy objective. Arab and Palestinian governments will need to take strong action against terrorist cells. The threat of civil war is large. However, it will take such strong action to demonstrate the serious intent of government leaders to live in peace with Israel. Terrorists are cowardly. They hide among civilians. They attack defenseless civilians. They require the backing of oil money from Iran and Saudi Arabia. They require safe haven of nearby states so that they can follow through on their war. It will take Arab governments committed to living in peace with Israel to put an end to all this. Such action requires visionary leaders with courage. So far, I do not see such leadership emerging in those countries.

The difficulty of dealing the mindset within the Palestinian community is clear in many news reports. The Los Angles Times had report in August 2003 about a Masq, a father of two, to blow himself and an observant Jew up on a Jerusalem bus. The wife said she prayed twice to God, thanking God for this honor. She was five months pregnant with their third child. She was proud that God allowed him to become a martyr. He had a gift for public speaking, was a passionate preacher, and studied for his master's degree, as well as being a family man. He was also a member of Hamas. He videotaped a statement that was to be broadcast a week after his death. He explained that he was on a mission to

avenge the death of Abdullah Kawasme, a Hamas operative killed by Israeli troops in June, and Mohammed Sidr, Islamic Jihad's top man in Hebron.

Many Americans justly wonder about putting American soldiers at risk. As a temporary measure, some kind of peacekeeping force will prove necessary, even if it is from countries other than America.

165

God's world is one world. The unity now being thrust upon us by technological revolution has far outrun our moral and spiritual capacity to achieve a stable world. The enforced unity of humanity, increasingly evident on all levels of life, presents the Church as well as all people with problems that will not wait for answer: injustice, war, exploitation, privilege, population, international ecological crisis, proliferation of arsenals of nuclear weapons, development of transnational business organizations that operate beyond the effective control of any governmental structure, and the increase of tyranny in all its forms. This generation must find viable answers to these and related questions if humanity is to continue on this earth. We commit ourselves as a Church to the achievement of a world community that is a fellowship of persons who honestly love one another. We pledge ourselves to seek the meaning of the gospel in all issues that divide people and threaten the growth of world community.

The Book of Resolutions #290 urges ending the colonial status of Puerto Rico. #296 establishes some principles for imposing sanctions.

World community often is a semi-personal rhetorical connotation that represents Humanity in a singular context as in "…for the sake of the World Community" or "…with the approval of the World Community".

It sometimes is used to reference the United Nations or its affiliated agencies as bodies of governance. Other times it is a generic term with no explicit ties to states or governments but retaining a political connotation.

In terms of human needs, humanitarian aid, human rights, and other discourse in the humanities, the world community is akin to the conceptual Global village aimed at

the inclusion of non-aligned countries, aboriginal peoples, the Third World into the connected world via the communications infrastructure or at least representative ties to it.

In terms of the Global economy, some economists see the world community as an inter-dependent system of goods and services with semi-permeable boundaries and flexible sets of import/export rules. Proponents of Globalization may tend to establish or impose more rigidity to this framework. Controversy has arisen as to whether this paradigm will strengthen or weaken the world as a community.

When considering Sustainable development and Ecology, the inter-dependence angle generally expands quickly to a Global context. In this paradigm, the planet as a whole represents a single Biome and the World's population represents the Ecological succession in a singular eco-system. This also can be recognized as the World Community.

The term world community is often used in the context of establishing and maintaining world peace through a peace process or through a resolvable end to war and world war. Many social movements and political theories that deal with these issues revolve around the institutionalization of propagating the idea of world community.

Nations and Cultures

As individuals are affirmed by God in their diversity, so are nations and cultures. We recognize that no nation or culture is absolutely just and right in its treatment of its own people, nor is any nation totally without regard for the welfare of its citizens. The Church must regard nations as accountable for unjust treatment of their citizens and others living within their borders. While recognizing valid differences in culture and political philosophy, we stand for justice and peace in every nation.

National Power and Responsibility

Some nations possess more military and economic power than do others. Upon the powerful rests responsibility to exercise their wealth and influence with restraint. We affirm the right and duty of people of all nations to determine their own destiny. We urge the major political powers to use their nonviolent power to maximize the political, social, and economic self-determination of other nations rather than to further their own special interests. We applaud international efforts to develop a more just international economic order in which the limited resources of the earth will be used to the maximum benefit of all nations and peoples. We urge Christians in every society to encourage the governments under which they live and the economic entities within their societies to aid and work for the development of more just economic orders.

War and Peace

We believe war is incompatible with the teachings and example of Christ. We therefore reject war as an instrument of national foreign policy, to be employed only as a last resort in the prevention of such evils as genocide, brutal suppression of human rights, and unprovoked international aggression. We insist that the first moral duty of all nations is to resolve by peaceful means every dispute that arises between or among them; that human values must outweigh military claims as governments determine their priorities; that the militarization of society must be challenged and stopped; that the manufacture, sale, and deployment of armaments must be reduced and controlled; and that the production, possession, or use of nuclear weapons be condemned. Consequently, we endorse general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

The Book of Resolutions #339 opposes the military action in Iraq, since it did so without approval from the UN. #340 affirms the values of multilateralism and rejects direct American action. It specifically expresses concern for the dominance of American military might.

Justice and Law

Persons and groups must feel secure in their life and right to live within a society if order is to be achieved and maintained by law. We denounce as immoral an ordering of life that perpetuates injustice. Nations, too, must feel secure in the world if world community is to become a fact.

Believing that international justice requires the participation of all peoples, we endorse the United Nations and its related bodies and the International Court of Justice as the best instruments now in existence to achieve a world of justice and law. We commend

the efforts of all people in all countries who pursue world peace through law. We endorse international aid and cooperation on all matters of need and conflict. We urge acceptance for membership in the United Nations of all nations who wish such membership and who accept United Nations responsibility. We urge the United Nations to take a more aggressive role in the development of international arbitration of disputes and actual conflicts among nations by developing binding third-party arbitration. Bilateral or multilateral efforts outside of the United Nations should work in concert with, and not contrary to, its purposes. We reaffirm our historic concern for the world as our parish and seek for all persons and peoples full and equal membership in a truly world community.

The Book of Resolutions #309 affirms United Methodist support for the International Criminal Court.

The United Nations (UN) is an international organization whose stated aims are to facilitate cooperation in international law, international security, economic development, social progress and human rights issues.

The United Nations was founded in 1945 to replace the League of Nations, in the hope that it would intervene in conflicts between nations and thereby avoid war. The organization began with fifty countries signing the United Nations Charter. The organization's structure still reflects in some ways the circumstances of its founding. The five permanent members of the UN Security Council, each of which has veto power on any Security Council resolution, are the main victors of World War II or their successor states. They are the People's Republic of China (which replaced the Republic of China in 1971); the French Republic; the Russian Federation (which replaced the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in 1991); the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; and the United States of America.

As of 2007, there are 192 United Nations member states, encompassing almost every recognized independent state. From its headquarters in New York City, the UN and its specialized agencies decide on substantive and administrative issues in regular

meetings held throughout each year. The organization is divided into administrative bodies, including the General Assembly, Security Council, Economic and Social Council, Secretariat, and the International Court of Justice (ICJ). Additional bodies deal with the governance of all other UN System agencies, such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The UN's most visible public figure is the Secretary-General. The current Secretary-General is Ban Ki-moon of South Korea, who assumed the post on 1 January 2007.

The stated aims of the United Nations are to prevent war, to safeguard human rights, to provide a mechanism for international law, and to promote social and economic progress, improve living standards and fight diseases. It gives the opportunity for countries to balance global interdependence and national interests when addressing international problems. Toward these ends, it ratified a Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.

The International Court of Justice (ICJ), located in The Hague, Netherlands, is the main court of the UN. Its purpose is to adjudicate disputes among states. The court has heard cases related to war crimes, illegal state interference and ethnic cleansing, among others. The ICJ was created in 1946 and continues to hear cases.

A related court, the International Criminal Court (ICC), began operating in 2002 through international discussions initiated by the General Assembly. It is the first permanent international court charged with trying those who commit the most serious crimes under international law, including war crimes and genocide. The ICC is functionally independent of the UN in terms of personnel and financing, but some meetings of the ICC governing body, the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute,

are held at the UN. There is a "relationship agreement" between the ICC and the UN that governs how the two institutions regard each other legally.

A large share of UN expenditures addresses the core UN mission of peace and security. The peacekeeping budget for the 2005-2006 fiscal year is approximately $5 billion (compared to approximately $1.5 billion for the UN core budget over the same period), with some 70,000 troops deployed in 17 missions around the world. The Human Security Report 2005,[22] produced by the Human Security Centre at the University of British Columbia with support from several governments and foundations, documented a dramatic, but largely unrecognized, decline in the number of wars, genocides and human rights abuses since the end of the Cold War. Statistics include:

> a 40% drop in violent conflict;
> an 80% drop in the most deadly conflicts; and
> an 80% drop in genocide and politicide.

The report argued that international activism — mostly spearheaded by the UN — has been the main cause of the post–Cold War decline in armed conflict, though the report indicated the evidence for this contention is mostly circumstantial.

The report singles out several specific investments that have paid off:

A sixfold increase in the number of UN missions mounted to prevent wars, from 1990 to 2002.

A fourfold increase in efforts to stop existing conflicts, from 1990 to 2002.

A sevenfold increase in the number of ‘Friends of the Secretary-General’, ‘Contact Groups’ and other government-initiated mechanisms to support peacemaking and peace-building missions, from 1990 to 2003.

An elevenfold increase in the number of economic sanctions against regimes around the world, from 1989 to 2001.

A fourfold increase in the number of UN peacekeeping operations, from 1987 to 1999.

These efforts were both more numerous and, on average, substantially larger and more complex than those of the Cold War era.

In the area of Peacekeeping, successes include:

The US Government Accountability Office concluded that UN Peacekeeping is eight times less expensive than funding a U.S. force.

A 2005 RAND Corp study found the UN to be successful in two out of three peacekeeping efforts. It also compared UN nation-building efforts to those of the U.S., and found that of eight UN cases, seven are at peace, whereas of eight U.S. cases, four are at peace.

Failures in security issues

In many cases UN members have shown reluctance to achieve or enforce Security Council resolutions. Iraq is said to have broken 17 Security Council resolutions dating back to June 28, 1991 as well as trying to bypass the UN economic sanctions. For nearly a decade, Israel delayed implementing resolutions calling for the dismantling of Jewish communities in "occupied territories". Such failures stem from the UN's intergovernmental nature — in many respects it is an association of 192 member states who must reach consensus, not an independent organization. Even when actions are mandated by the 15-member Security Council, the Secretariat is rarely given the full resources needed to carry out the mandates.

Other serious security failures include:

Failure to prevent the 1994 Rwandan genocide, which resulted in the killings of nearly a million people, due to the refusal of security council members to approve any military action.

Failure by MONUC (UNSC Resolution 1291) to intervene effectively during the Second Congo War, which claimed nearly five million people in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), 1998-2002, and in carrying out and distributing humanitarian aid.

Failure to intervene in the 1995 Srebrenica massacre: despite the fact that the UN designated Srebrenica a "safe haven" for refugees and assigned 600 Dutch peacekeepers to protect it, the peacekeeping force were not authorised by member nations to use force.

Failure to successfully deliver food to starving people in Somalia; local warlords instead usually seized the food. A U.S./UN attempt to apprehend the warlords seizing these shipments resulted in the 1993 Battle of Mogadishu.

Failure to implement the provisions of UN Security Council Resolutions 1559 and 1701 calling for disarmament of Lebanese paramilitary groups such as Fatah and Hezbollah.

Sexual abuse by UN peacekeepers. In December 2004, during the UN peacekeeping mission in Congo, at least 68 cases of alleged rape, prostitution and pedophilia and more than 150 other allegations have been uncovered by UN investigators, all perpetrated by UN peacekeepers, specifically ones from Pakistan, Uruguay, Morocco, Tunisia, South Africa and Nepal. Peacekeepers from three of those nations are also accused of obstructing the investigation. Also, a French UN logistics expert in Congo was charged of rape and child pornography in the same month. The BBC

reported that young girls were abducted and raped by UN peacekeepers in Port-au-Prince. Similar accusations have been made in Liberia and in Sudan.

The UN established the Oil-for-Food Program in 1996. Its purpose was to allow Iraq to sell oil on the world market in exchange for food, medicine, and other humanitarian needs of ordinary Iraqi citizens who were affected by international economic sanctions, without allowing the Iraqi government to rebuild its military in the wake of the first Gulf War. Under UN auspices, over $65 billion worth of Iraqi oil was sold on the world market. Officially, about $46 billion was used for humanitarian needs. Additional revenue paid for Gulf War reparations through a Compensation Fund, UN administrative and operational costs for the Programme (2.2%), and the weapons inspection programme (0.8%).

It was discontinued in late 2003 amidst allegations of widespread abuse and corruption. The former director, Benon Sevan of Cyprus, was suspended and then resigned from the UN, as an interim progress reportPDF (3.67 MiB) of a UN-sponsored investigation led by Paul Volcker concluded that Sevan had accepted bribes from the Iraqi regime, and recommended that his UN immunity be lifted to allow for a criminal investigation.

Among the other people and organizations implicated in the scandal was Kofi Annan's son Kojo Annan and the Australian Wheat Board. Kojo Annan was alleged to have illegally procured UN Oil-for-Food contracts on behalf of the Swiss company Cotecna. India's foreign minister, Natwar Singh, was removed from office because of his role in the scandal. The Australian government set up the Cole Inquiry in November 2005 to investigate whether the Australian Wheat Board breached any laws with its contracts

with Iraq during the Oil-for-Food Programme. AWB paid Saddam Hussein's regime almost $300 million, through a front company called 'Alia', to secure wheat contracts to Iraq. The Cole Inquiry was scheduled to report on 24 November 2006.

Proposed Social Creed

God in the Spirit revealed in Jesus Christ,
calls us by grace
to be renewed in the image of our Creator,
that we may be one
in divine love for the world.

Today is the day
God cares for the integrity of creation,
wills the healing and wholeness of all life,
weeps at the plunder of earth's goodness
And so shall we.

Today is the day
God embraces all hues of humanity,
delights in diversity and difference,
favors solidarity transforming strangers into friends.
And so shall we.

Today is the day
God cries with the masses of starving people,
despises growing disparity between rich and poor,
demands justice for workers in the marketplace.
And so shall we.

Today is the day
God deplores violence in our homes and streets,
rebukes the world's warring madness,
humbles the powerful and lifts up the lowly.
And so shall we.

Today is the day
God calls for nations and peoples to live in peace,
celebrates where justice and mercy embrace,
exults when the wolf grazes with the lamb.
And so shall we.

Today is the day
God brings good news to the poor,
proclaims release to the captives,
gives sight to the blind, and
sets the oppressed free.
And so shall we.

Social Creed

166
We believe in God, Creator of the world; and in Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of creation. We believe in the Holy Spirit, through whom we acknowledge God's gifts, and we repent of our sin in misusing these gifts to idolatrous ends.

We affirm the natural world as God's handiwork and dedicate ourselves to its preservation, enhancement, and faithful use by humankind.

We joyfully receive for ourselves and others the blessings of community, sexuality, marriage, and the family.

We commit ourselves to the rights of men, women, children, youth, young adults, the aging, and people with disabilities; to improvement of the quality of life; and to the rights and dignity of racial, ethnic, and religious minorities.

We believe in the right and duty of persons to work for the glory of God and the good of themselves and others and in the protection of their welfare in so doing; in the rights to property as a trust from God, collective bargaining, and responsible consumption; and in the elimination of economic and social distress.

We dedicate ourselves to peace throughout the world, to the rule of justice and law among nations, and to individual freedom for all people of the world.

We believe in the present and final triumph of God's Word in human affairs and gladly accept our commission to manifest the life of the gospel in the world. Amen.

(It is recommended that this statement of Social Principles be continually available to United Methodist Christians and that it be emphasized regularly in every congregation. It is further recommended that "Our Social Creed" be frequently used in Sunday worship.)

General Rules

It is therefore expected of all who continue therein that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

First: By doing no harm, by avoiding evil of every kind, especially that which is most generally practiced, such as:

The taking of the name of God in vain.
The profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work therein or by buying or selling.
Drunkenness: buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, unless in cases of extreme necessity.
Slaveholding; buying or selling slaves.
Fighting, quarreling, brawling, brother going to law with brother; returning evil for evil, or railing for railing; the using many words in buying or selling.
The buying or selling goods that have not paid the duty.
The giving or taking things on usury—i.e., unlawful interest.
Uncharitable or unprofitable conversation; particularly speaking evil of magistrates or of ministers.
Doing to others as we would not they should do unto us.
Doing what we know is not for the glory of God, as:
The putting on of gold and costly apparel.
The taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus.
The singing those songs, or reading those books, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God.
Softness and needless self-indulgence.
Laying up treasure upon earth.
Borrowing without a probability of paying; or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.
It is expected of all who continue in these societies that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

Secondly: By doing good; by being in every kind merciful after their power; as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and, as far as possible, to all men:
To their bodies, of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison.
To their souls, by instructing, reproving, or exhorting all we have any intercourse with; trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine that "we are not to do good unless our hearts be free to it."
By doing good, especially to them that are of the household of faith or groaning so to be; employing them preferably to others; buying one of another, helping each other in business, and so much the more because the world will love its own and them only.
By all possible diligence and frugality, that the gospel be not blamed.
By running with patience the race which is set before them, denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily; submitting to bear the reproach of Christ, to be as the filth and offscouring of the world; and looking that men should say all manner of evil of them falsely, for the Lord's sake.
It is expected of all who desire to continue in these societies that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

Thirdly: By attending upon all the ordinances of God; such are:
The public worship of God.
The ministry of the Word, either read or expounded.

The Supper of the Lord.
Family and private prayer.
Searching the Scriptures.
Fasting or abstinence.

These are the General Rules of our societies; all of which we are taught of God to observe, even in his written Word, which is the only rule, and the sufficient rule, both of our faith and practice. And all these we know his Spirit writes on truly awakened hearts. If there be any among us who observe them not, who habitually break any of them, let it be known unto them who watch over that soul as they who must give an account. We will admonish him of the error of his ways. We will bear with him for a season. But then, if he repent not, he hath no more place among us. We have delivered our own souls.

Fundamentalist Worldview – Coalition on Revival

The following is a statement of the worldview of modern fundamentalists, as expressed in the Manifesto of the Christian Church. The signers adopted it in 1984 and 1986. It states the vision of people like D. James Kennedy, Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, James Dobson, and others. One can find more documents at www.reformation.net

The Nature of God

1. We affirm that there is only one living God who is infinite in being and perfection, a most pure spirit, invisible, and absolutely distinct from His creation.
We deny any and all views of God that negate or deviate from the traditional Judeo-Christian concept of God, including Atheism, Deism, Finite-godism, Panentheism (Process God), Polytheism, and Pantheism.
2. We affirm that God is both transcendent over and immanent in His creation.
We deny that in His being God is totally Other or that He is identified with His creation.
3. We affirm that from time to time God supernaturally intervenes in the course of natural or human events to accomplish His redemptive purposes.
We deny any naturalistic view which either rejects a supernatural God or His miraculous intervention in nature or history.
4. We affirm that God is a personal, infinite, eternal, self-existent, unchangeable, indivisible, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, spiritual being Who is the creator and sustainer of the universe.
We deny that God is impersonal, finite, temporal, changeable, divisible, material, or is limited in His power, knowledge, or presence in the universe.
5. We affirm that God is absolutely holy, just, good, true, loving, and merciful in His being and all His activities.
We deny that God is any less than absolutely and totally perfect in all of His attributes.
6. We affirm that this one God exists eternally in three distinct Persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), each of whom shares equally in all the divine attributes.
6 42 Articles of Affirmation and Denial
We deny that God is more than one Being (as in Tri-theism) or that He is less than three eternal Persons (as in strict Monotheism, Arianism, or Modalism).

The Nature of the Universe

7. We affirm that the entire universe, including all finite beings, was created by God out of nothing (*ex nihilo*).
We deny that the universe is not created or that it was created out of God (*ex deo*) or out of preexisting material (*ex materia*).
8. We affirm that the space/time universe is finite, temporal, and real.
We deny that the space/time universe is infinite, eternal, or illusory.
9. We affirm that the entire universe is absolutely distinct from and utterly dependent upon its Creator-God.
We deny that the universe is in any way to be identified with God or that it exists independently of God.
10. We affirm that man (male and female) was specially created by God.
We deny that man evolved from or is genetically derived from the lower forms of life.
11. We affirm that man was created in the image and likeness of God, and consequently is endowed by God with immeasurable dignity and worth.
We deny any view that tends to demean or diminish the God-given freedom, dignity, and value of man or reduce him to the status of a mere animal.
12. We affirm that man as a rational and moral being is ultimately responsible and accountable to God.
We deny that man's moral actions are determined genetically or environmentally, or that his responsibility is limited to himself or society.
13. We affirm that because of man's rebellion against God, both he and his environment exist in a corrupted state and stand under the condemnation of God.
We deny that either man or the world in their present corrupted state may be perfected by natural or human agencies alone.
14. We affirm that man, from the moment of conception, is a creature who has individual conscious existence eternally beyond physical death.
We deny that man is a merely mortal creature whose individual conscious existence terminates at physical death, or that man's unborn offspring are less than human.

The Nature of Truth

15. We affirm that God is the ultimate author of all truth.
We deny that man can be the ultimate author and determiner of truth.
16. We affirm that truth is objective, absolute and ultimately non-contradictory.
We deny any view that reduces truth to a purely relative, subjective, experiential, or a paradoxical status.
17. We affirm truth to be that which corresponds to and accurately describes and explains reality.
We deny any view that conceives of reality as mere subjective experience, existential encounter, mere coherence, dialectical precess, or that conceives of reality in any other relativistic manner.
18. We affirm that insofar as God has revealed truth, whether in general or special revelation, it is knowable by man even though it is neither exhaustive nor comprehensive.
We deny that the limitations of man's knowledge of God's truth leave him incapable of knowing, communicating, or using that truth.

19. We affirm that all truth disclosed in God's special revelation, the 66 books of the Bible, is propositional.
We deny that the human language of the Bible is an inadequate vehicle for communicating God's truth to man.

The Nature of True Values

20. We affirm that God is the source of all right and just values and that they reflect His moral character.
We deny that true values are ultimately derived from man or any other finite source.
21. We affirm that the basis of all true values are objective and absolute.
We deny that the basis of all true values is merely subjective, relative, or cultural.
22. We affirm that true values are determined by God and merely discovered by man.
We deny that it is legitimate for man to create his own true values on either the personal or societal level.
23. We affirm the true values revealed by God place a prescriptive obligation on man by which he must order his life.

We deny that true values are merely descriptive of human behavior or that man is not obliged to live by them.
24. We affirm that the only perfect, comprehensive, and complete expression of God's values is to be found in the Bible.
We deny that those who are unaware of the Bible are thereby excused from moral obligations revealed by God in the hearts of men.

The Nature of Authority

25. We affirm that the ultimate source of authority is God.
We deny that man has the authority to create his own moral standards.
26. We affirm that God has expressed His authority to His creatures in general revelation and most clearly and fully in special revelation.
We deny that human society, culture, or consensus is a legitimate basis for man's moral conduct.
27. We affirm that God in his general revelation, through the works of creation and the consciences of men, have revealed His eternal power and deity with His moral law in the hearts of all men, even though they in their corrupted state suppress this truth in unrighteousness.
We deny that man is either an amoral creature or that he is inherently good or naturally perfectible.
28. We affirm that God's normative, special revelation is expressed in and limited to His authoritative, inerrant, written Word, the Bible, which is the final bar of appeal in all matters of faith and life and stands in judgement over all reason, revelation, and experience.
We deny that God has left man without any normative special revelation or that there is any other or additional normative special revelation from God.
29. We affirm that the laws of man must be based upon the laws of God.
We deny that the laws of man have any inherent authority of their own or that their ultimate authority is rightly derived from or created by man.

The Nature of Salvation

30. We affirm that God alone is the source of man's salvation.

We deny that man can initiate or attain his own salvation.
31. We affirm that Jesus Christ, the God-Man, by virtue of His perfect life, His substitutionary, atoning death, and His bodily resurrection, is the only Mediator between a Holy God and sinful man.
We deny that man can achieve salvation by means of secular education, social programs, political action, genetic engineering, psychology, or self realization, or by any other means.
32. We affirm that Jesus Christ in His Incarnation is wholly God and wholly man, two natures in one person, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation.
We deny that the two natures of Jesus Christ can be confused, changed, or divided, or that the one Divine Person can be separated from either nature.
33. We affirm that God's gift of salvation is supernaturally applied to those who believe by the gracious working of God the Holy Spirit.
We deny that in the matter of his salvation, man is left to his own resources or that he can merit this salvation by his own works.
34. We affirm that salvation is from the presence, power, and penalty of sin and to joyful obedience and service to God in His present and future kingdom.
We deny that salvation applies only to the eternal destinies of man.

The Nature of Human Government

35. We affirm that the institution of human government has been ordained by God.
We deny that any form of government (or ruler) has authority from any source other than God or that God approves governments indiscriminately.
36. We affirm that God has established a multiplicity of human governments such as individual, familial, ecclesiastical, and civil.
We deny that any form of human government (or ruler) has valid authority from any source but God or that any human government has either absolute or complete jurisdiction over all other governments.
37. We affirm that it is the duty of all citizens to obey God ordained authority.
We deny that any citizen is obliged to obey any government when it transgresses its God given mandate or requires him to disobey God's Laws.
38. We affirm that it is always the obligation of believers to participate in promoting good government.
We deny that a Christian can fully discharge his duty to God apart from social, cultural, and political action aimed at influencing society for God and for human good.

The Nature (and Purpose) of History

39. We affirm that the Sovereign God is providentially directing the course of human history and that the saving purposes of God in Christ are accomplished within the same history.
We deny any philosophy which espouses a naturalistic, chaotic, cyclical, dialectical, two-leveled or any other view that neglects or negates the directive activity of God in history.
40. We affirm that the purpose and meaning history is to bring praise and glory to God and abundant life to His children.
We deny any view which rejects meaning or purpose in history or which has man, nature, or anything other than God enshrined as its ultimate object.

41. We affirm that although man may be the primary focus and subject of history, God is its ultimate author and finisher.
We deny any view in which man is elevated to the level of architect, director, or determiner of the course of historical events.
42. We affirm that the consummation of history is the final triumph of God over all death and evil and their consequences, and its ultimate goal is the manifestation of the glory of God.
We deny any view which embraces reincarnation, universalism, the ultimate overpowering of good by evil, the annihilation of man, or the elimination of a place of eternal punishment and separation from God.

What is the Coalition on Revival?
The Coalition on Revival is a network of evangelical leaders from every major denominational and theological perspective who share a vision for and a to revival, renewal, and reformation in Church and society in America. People of Anabaptist, Arminian, Lutheran, Calvinist, and Wesleyan denominational backgrounds are all representedamong COR's leaders. Pre-, a-, and post-millenialists are cooperating with each other, sharing the exciting task of getting God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven insofar as that is possible between now and whenever Christ comes back to Earth. Charismatics and non-charismatics, covenant and dispensationalist theologians, have joined arm in arm in prayerand hard work to see revival, renewal, and reformation in the Christian Church and the American culture. COR's vision is to see Christians everywhere doing all they can in the power of the Holy Spirit to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10: 5), in every aspect of life. Toward that end, we have developed a series of worldview documents that set forth what we believe are the fundamental and essential points of the total Christian world and life view. The COR worldview documents state what we believe are the biblical principles for all spheres of human life including theology, evangelism, discipleship, law, civil governments, economics, education, family, medicine, psychology and counseling, arts and media, business and professions, and science and technology. We believe that the COR worldview documents state where the entire Church must stand and what action it must take to accomplish its task in the remaining years of the Twentieth Century and on into the next century. COR steering committee members from all walks of life were joined by many hundreds of other interested Christian scholars, pastors, and laymen in developing the COR documents during many series of workshops and conventions. Each document therefore, reflects input from theologians, philosophers, professionals in their respective fields, pastors, and lay Christians. We have sought to avoid denominational and theological bias in the documents; our aim has been to focus on principles so fundamental that we are convinced no Bible-believing Christian who studied the major questions related to each sphere of life would come to a contradictory conclusion. COR views itself as a "Bible obedience, holiness movement" that crosses denominational and theological lines. The next step on its agenda, now that its basic documents are complete, is to disseminate them widely and to educate hundreds of thousands of Christians on how to make Christ Lord of absolutely every aspect of life. We plan to do that through publications, and through seminars, and training workshops in the major cities of America and Canada. COR will also work in cooperation with other Christian networking

groups to help unify the pastors in major population centers around the vision of mobilizing their people to “Get God’s will done in their city as it is in heaven” to whatever degree that is possible before the return of Christ. We believe America can be turned around and once again function as a Christian nation as it did in its earlier years. We believe that wherever the pastors of any city in the world join together in unity to make Christ Lord of every sphere of life, and, with Spirit led strategy, mobilize their people into a unified spiritual army; that city can and will become “a city set upon a hill” and be “a place where righteousness dwells.” About the Manifesto On July 4, 1986 at a Solemn Assembly in front of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D. C., and during a three-day Coalition on Revival Congress on the Christian Worldview, 60 of COR’s national Steering Committee members and another 400 Christian leaders from a broad spectrum of theological viewpoints signed The Manifesto for the Christian Church. The focus of the first portion of the Manifesto is repentance by the Church for not being the “salt and light” it should have been and for allowing the forces of darkness, by default, to replace the Christian roots of our nation with secularized relativism and disintegration. The Manifesto states where the signers believe the Church must stand and what action it must take at this point in history to fulfill the Great Commission. The signers are convinced that no revival or reformation of the Church or society, of any depth or longevity, can happen until the leadership of the Body of Christ commits itself to living and teaching the kind of Biblical Christianity called for by this Manifesto. Their hope is thatpastors and Christian leaders in every major metropolitan area will call their people to a local Solemn Assembly forrepentance and rededication to the Christian task wherein the Manifesto can be read publicly and the local Body of Christcan begin mobilizing itself into a united team of courageous, world-changing, servants of Christ. May it be used by Godas a trumpet call to help awaken, unify, and mobilize the Body of Christ to accomplish all Christ demands of us at thiscritical point in history.

Page 5

Preamble

To promote Biblical obedience, peace, unity, love, joy, and compassion among all men, and to secure for ourselves and future generations the blessing of God Almighty, we hereby enter into a Solemn Covenant, grounded in the following declaration:

God, eternal Creator, Author of liberty, has spoken with reason, accuracy, and clarity concerning justice, truth, and reality in Heaven and on Earth. In bold defiance of God’s Word, the Bible, the fallen race of man has perverted justice, truth, and reality, leaving a painful legacy of negligence, confusion, chaos, and exploitation; and, thus, has created a compelling need for correction and redemption by our merciful God. In this twentieth century, evil has so multiplied that all life and liberty are at risk of destruction by the godless or by the judgment of God. The Church of Jesus Christ, now grown lukewarm and indifferent in pursuing its redemptive priestly ministry and corrective prophetic authority, largely has tolerated or participated in the dominant evils and error of this sin-filled age, further adding to our planetary crisis., That future generations ofGod’s children and nations yet unborn may learn of righteousness and judgment without sufferingthe cost of repeated sins, we declare with brokenness the record of our grievous transgression of theDivine Law.

An Act of Contrition and Humble Repentance

We humbly and openly confess that too often, as a people and as individuals:
1. We have failed to care adequately for the souls of men who will spend eternity in the fires of hell if they fail to receive for themselves the atoning blood of Christ, bowing their knees before Him as Lord of their lives and King of the universe;
2. We have disobeyed God's clear commands in Scripture;
3. We have built our own egos rather than advancing the Kingdom of Christ;
4. We have all too often fallen short of the integrity, faithfulness, and total honesty with each other that God requires of us before the watching world;
5. We have failed to confront falsehood and unrighteousness consistently in the Church or in the world because of our fear of man and of losing prestige or security;

Page 6
6. We have been content to reduce the power of the transcendent gospel to mere creedal form devoid of spiritual content or present reality by our harlotry with the idols of personal peace and affluence;
7. We have neglected our God-ordained duties to be the world's salt, light, teacher, and example; as a result, the world is in desperate trouble and western civilization stands on the brink of self-destruction;
8. We and our fathers have settled for a sub-standard, false version of Christianity in our local churches and denominations;
9. We have tolerated sin within our ranks when we should have administered church discipline and excommunication;
10. We have allowed heresies to creep into our churches and institutions of higher learning, failing to demand of our teachers that they teach and stand upon the faithful and inerrant written Word of God;
11. We have heaped to ourselves teachers and pastors to tickle our ears with pleasant falsehoods and entertaining fables rather than convicting us of sin and demanding that we live righteous lives of obedience to the Bible;
12. We sold our children's minds and souls to the godless influence of secularized education and the media;
13. We have allowed our churches to become irrelevant, powerless ghettos while those who hate or neglect God and His righteous standards for society have stolen the America of our founding fathers out from under our slumbering eyes;
14. We Have allowed misguided policies, flagrant sins, and hideous atrocities to be enacted by our elected and appointed officials – legislative, executive, and judicial – without rising up en masse, and demanding that they be corrected in the name of God and for the sake of justice;
15. We have permitted both Christian and non-Christian men of our society to fail in leadership, becoming emasculated, tamed, dependent, self-centered, and soft; and, in the opposite extreme, we have allowed some men to abuse their authority by their lack of sacrificial love for their families;
16. We have lived beyond our means by misusing credit, so trading our liberty for financial bondage;
17. We have adopted the covetousness and materialism of our surrounding culture, seeking the approval of men and neglecting the fear of the Lord;

18. We have been caught up in a self-centered, false version of Christianity, focusing on our own needs and desires rather than on God's glory and on sacrificing ourselves for the needs of our Christian brothers and fellow humans;
19. We have concerned ourselves more with Heaven, the future, and escaping this world at Christ's Second Coming, than with preparing His Bride to be spotless, beautiful, glorious, and pleasing to Him when He comes;6COR Manifesto
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20. We foolishly have allowed Satan to divide us from other members in His Body through pride, jealousy, and competition, through a lack of humble serving of one another, and by concentrating on divisive minor issues rather than the clear Biblical articles of faith upon which we agree;
21. We have rested, idle and uncaring, while Satanically inspired Marxist Communism and a revival of pagan religions has enslaved two-thirds of our planet, causing massive, needless suffering to the peoples under their sway;
22. We have failed to conduct our lives or manage our affairs in the conscious certainty that God's eternal standards for personal and social righteousness are unchanging and inexorable in their absolute cause-and-effect relationships, thus dishonoring God and playing the fool in our personal lives and social policies;
Therefore:
1. In brokenness and humility, we cast ourselves before the throne of Almighty God beseeching Him to forgive these sins of ours and our fathers that we have so grievously and callously committed against Him, against each other and against the dying world. We call upon our Father in Heaven to apply to these our sins the purifying, atoning blood of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.
2. In repentance, shame, and sorrow we ask our fellow Christians -all whom we have offended, ignored, and despised; before whom we have not been honest, open, vulnerable and tender; and whose ministries we have falsely believed we could do well without -to forgive us in the name of Jesus and for the sake of His glory and the unity of His Body. We hereby declare that we forgive all Christian brothers and sisters who have so treated us.
3. In shame and sorrow, we ask forgiveness of those fellow humans who have not bowed their knee to Jesus as King of the universe or yet come under the saving power of His shed Blood. Forgive us for caring so little for your souls that we have not ministered more aggressively and lovingly to you about your eternal destiny and your fear of death. Forgive us for our attempt to evangelize you that have been impersonal, mechanical, or insensitive. Forgive us for displaying before you ugly, uninspiring lives devoid of God's integrity, compassion, and power. Forgive us for being such poor examples of Christ's love by our disunity that you have rejected both Him and us, to your own spiritual impoverishment. Forgive us for our failure to demonstrate to you biblical answers for your difficulties and problems in life. Forgive us for failing to occupy our proper position as servants in the affairs of law, government, economics, business, education, media, the arts, medicine, and science as the Creator's salt and light to the world, so that these spheres of life might offer you more help, justice, hope, peace, and joy.

Page 8
We have failed you miserably and we beg you to forgive us in the name of the great God who created us all for His glory. And now, O God, forgive our willful disobedience, hardness of heart, and selfish indulgence. Hear our prayers, forgive our sin, and heal our land, O lord; thus fulfilling the merciful promise of your Word. “O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! For Thine own sake, O my God, donot delay, because Thy people are called by Thy name.” (Daniel 9: 19)
A Solemn Covenant
Now, for the Glory of God, having repented of our sin and counted the cost of true discipleship, willing either to be martyred or to reign with Him, we hereby solemnly covenant with Almighty God and with one another, to live henceforth in full, serious obedience to all the Bible’s commands that apply to us today, to the best of our ability and in dependence on the power of the Holy Spirit, from now until the day we die, so help us God. We hereby voluntarily invite others in the family of God to hold us accountable to live in full obedience to the Bible, and to show us with demonstrated love whatever they observe between our lives and what is written in the Bible. We submit in advance to Biblical church discipline as described inMatthew 18: 15-20. We commit ourselves, in the presence of God Almighty and of our Christian brothers and sisters:
to live to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever-the chief reasons for our existence in time and eternity;
to offer ourselves as living sacrifices to be used as God wills to build up the Body of Christ on earth that it may become biblical, holy, strong, courageous, unified, and effective in fulfilling its commissioned task on earth;
to do all we can, in the lives of our fellow humans and in the societies in which we live, to see God’s will done on earth as it is in heaven, insofar as that is possible between now and the physical return of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.
A Statement of Essential Truths and a Call to Action
Whereas, our souls are burdened with the unbiblical, Laodicean state of the Church in our age; and,
Whereas, the Body of Christ on earth has failed to be the salt, light, and teacher of a dark and dying world; and,
Whereas, we believe that we, the sleeping , uncaring, uncourageous, and unholy members of the Body of Christ bear much of the blame for the fact that our own society and Western civilization are on the brink of self destruction;

Page 9
We therefore declare:
That a broad acceptance by the Bible-believing Church of the basic biblical affirmations stated herein should be considered essential, primary, foundational, and non-negotiable by all Christians who wish to work and pray toward the revival of the Church and the reformation of society; and,
That the Body of Christ, in order to fulfill her Lord’s Great Commission to make Bible-obeying disciples of all nations, needs to commit itself to the following statements of truth and plans of action.
A. The Church Must Learn What is Reality.

1. Inerrancy of the Bible. We affirm that the original manuscripts of the Old and New Testaments of the Bible were so inspired by God, that the human authors wrote the exact words and sentences God inspired them to write without error and without misrepresenting God, history or the created world in any way. What the Bible says, God says. Those inside and outside the Christian Church who teach that the Bible is partly true and partly false, and that it is up to us humans to decide which parts are which, stand in opposition to the view of the Bible held by Moses, David, Jesus, Paul, the early Church, the Reformers, and all of mainstream Christianity, down to the last century, and are, by their destructive teaching, undermining the faith of the next generation.
2. The Bible is the Final Test of All Truth Claims. We affirm that this God-inspired, inerrant Bible is the only absolute, objective, final test for all truth claims, and the clearest verbal picture of reality that has ever come into the hands of man-kind. By it, and it alone, are all philosophies, books, values, actions, and plans to be measured as to their consistency with reality, visible and invisible. Whatever statements or values are in opposition to the statements and values of the Bible err to the degree of their opposition.
3. The Bible States Reality for All Areas of Life and Thought. We affirm that the Bible is not only God's statements to us regarding religion, salvation, eternity, and righteousness, but also the final measurement and depository of certain fundamental facts of reality and basic principles that God wants all mankind to know in the spheres of law, government, economics, business, education, arts and communication, medicine, psychology, and science. All theories and practices of these spheres of life are only true, right, and realistic to the degree that they agree with the Bible. The Bible furnishes mankind with the only logical and verbal connection between time and eternity, religion and science, the visible and invisibleworlds.
4. Cause and Effect Relationships of God's Commandments. We affirm that God built the universe and man in accordance with the laws of His own Being in such a way that there is a cause and effect relationship between obeying the laws and commandments deposited in His Word and being blessed by God. Those people or nations that live in opposition to biblical laws and commandments will, sooner or later, be cursed and destroyed. This is not to say that we can force God's hand to bless us, but rather that it is always best for us to obey His will.

Page 10

It is, therefore, to the great benefit of all mankind, Christian and non-Christian alike, to bring every society's judicial and legal systems into as close an approximation to the laws and commandments of the Bible as its citizens will allow.
5. Worldview. We affirm that the Bible presents God's own world view, which is consistent and practical and answers all of the basic life questions of man. To function properly in the Church and in the world, Christians must seek to understand, to the best of their ability, the full theological worldview presented in the Bible. They must be willing to measure all points of their own theology by the Bible and, in submission to the Bible, to make whatever changes are called for in their own theology.
6. The 42 Articles of The Essentials of the Christian Worldview. We affirm that the Coalition On Revival's 42 Articles of The Essentials of the Christian Worldview states the basic doctrines of historic Christianity and can serve as a theological test and guardrail to keep an individual or a church from heresy.

B. The Christian Church Must Live Under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and, Therefore, in Full Obedience to the Bible.

7. Lordship of Christ Non-Optional. We affirm that living under the total Lordship of Jesus Christ in every area of life is not optional for those who would call themselves Christians, Though obedience to the Bible's commands does not earn or retain salvation, still the Bible is clear in its teachings that no one who lives a life of deliberate, consistent disobedience to the Bible's commands does not earn or retain salvation, still the Bible is clear in its teachings that no one who lives a life of deliberate, consistent disobedience to the Bible's commands ought to call himself a Christian. We are saved by faith alone, but not by a faith that is alone, devoid of obedience.

8. Living Above Deliberate Sin. We affirm that it is possible and expected by God that Christians will and must live above conscious, deliberate choices to sin. We are capable of this because of our new nature the indwelling Holy Spirit and the ability of Christ's shed blood to break the power of canceled sin. This is not to say that the most holy of us do not need daily to say, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive ourdebtors."

9. The Great Commission. We affirm that the Great Commission is a mandate by our Lord to go forth into all the world and make Bible-obeying disciples of all nations. Getting men's souls saved is only a preliminary part of fulfilling the Great Commission. Our work is incomplete unless we teach them to obey all He commanded. The word of the Lord's prayer for God's will to "be done on earth as it is in heaven" are another way to state the essence of the same Great Commission.

Page 11

10. Christ's Lordship Extends to the Entire Universe. We affirm that a full understanding of the Lordship of Christ is to realize that, when Jesus stated, "All authority in heaven and earth has been given to Me, " He was declaring that whatever power Satan held over the world was broken by His death on the cross and His victorious resurrection. As Son of God and representative man, Jesus regained authority over the earth which Adam, as representative man, lost. This is the meaning of His being seated at the right hand of God. When Jesus returns, He will gain no greater authority over this earth and the forces of Satan than He had from the moment He ascended to and sat upon His throne, though He will exercise His authority in full power, then in a way He is not fully exercising it now.

11. Christian Maturity. We affirm that all Christians must be nurtured by those who are their spiritual leaders if they are to reach their full level of Christian maturity. No Christian or group of Christians has the right before God to live year after year on a spiritual plateau, stagnating in Christian immaturity. Christian maturity is capable enough of definition that the apostles categorized their people as either mature of immature. It is measured by the extent of one's conformity to the image of Christ, made visible by biblical obedience in every area of life.

12. The Necessity of Human Accountability. We affirm that because of our infinite capacity for self-deception, all of us who strive for Christian maturity and a biblically obedient life need to be held accountable to live in obedience to the Bible by living, trustworthy brothers and sisters. Apart from this our obedience must always fall short of its potential. This brother-to-brother accountability should be entered into mutually by voluntary association.

13. The Need for Confrontation. We affirm that in a life where there exists “the world, the flesh and the devil,” there is need for living confrontation over matters of falsehood and unrighteousness in the Church and in the world. It is impossible for any group of people to live truly biblically obedient lives without applying to each other regular confrontation, exhortation, rebuke and church discipline. Church discipline must be an on-going part of any congregation that chooses truly to live according to the Bible.
C. The Church Must Live in Love and Unity with Each Other.
14. Only One Body. We affirm that although there are many denominational and theological divisions within the body of Christ, in reality there exists only one Body of Christ to which all true Christians of all denominations belong. This central fact must be exemplified by churches and pastors at a local level and in a visible way. The desire in Christ’s heart is that His Body demonstrate visible, real Body unity, love, and interdependence.

Page 12

15. Local pastors’ Prayer Fellowships.
We affirm that the unity of the Body of Christ must be demonstrated and can be greatly aided by local pastors praying together in honest fellowship for each other’s lives and ministries. Their prayer and fellowship must go deep, to the point of sincere love, sacrifice, and experiencing joy at each other’s success.
16. Humility Required. We affirm that before local body unity will be real or have a large effect, pastors and Christian leaders must be willing to allow others to get credit for, or have control of joint projects, and to work in programs under the name of another church or leader. Humility and faithful servanthood are essential for true body unity, locally and nationally.
17. Loyalty and Support of Leaders in the Body. We affirm that within any local church or para-church organization there must be a real and visible unity of spirit, purpose, and leadership. Struggles for power and poorly defined organizational chains of command must be seen as problems not to be tolerated, except for temporary periods, until the unity around the proper leadership can be defined and established. A pastor or para-church leader needs his staff and board to be deeply loyal and unified around his leadership, without his vision being forced to compete with other visions within the church or organization.
D. The Christian Church Must be Salt and Light to the World.
18. Light and Salt are to Influence the World. We affirm that to be salt and light to the world means to influence it for good and to show it the way to live and conduct its affairs, In short, it means getting God’s will to “be done on earth as it is in heaven” and to “make disciples of all nations, teaching them to obey whatsoever I have commanded You,” Christ instituted the Church as the world’s teacher. The world will not know how to live or which direction to go without the Church’s biblical influence on its theories, laws, actions, and institutions. To be salt and light, the Church cannot exist in a Christian “ghetto or have a dichotomous view that falsely divides life into the spiritual versus the physical-historical-measurable.
19. Storming the Gates of Hell. We affirm that part of the task of the bearers of the Christian gospel is to identify, find, cast out, and break the Satanic power of demons over those to whom we minister. All Christian ministers inside and outside the institutional

church must know how to deal with and overpower demons that oppressor harass people in their care. They must do this in the name of Christ and by the power of His presently effective blood.

Page 13

20. Social Evils To Oppose. We affirm that all Bible-believing Christians must take a non-neutral stance in opposing, praying against, and speaking against social moral evils such as the following.

A. Abortion on demand, infanticide, and euthanasia

B. Adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bestiality and other forms of sexual perversion

C. Pornography, prostitution, sexual entertainment, rape, and other crimes of exploitation and physical, emotional, or sexual abuse

D. Drug abuse

E. Unjust treatment of the poor and disadvantaged

F. Criminal injustice

G. Racial Discrimination

H. Theft, fraud, and violence not in self defense

I. State usurpation of parental rights and God-given liberties

J. Statist-collectivist theft from citizens through devaluation of their money and redistribution of their wealth

K. Atheism, moral relativism, and evolutionism taught as a monopoly viewpoint in publicschools

L. Communism/ Marxism, fascism, Nazism and the one-world government of the New Age Movement

Now Therefore:

In hope of God’s mercy and blessing upon His Church and a needy world, we humbly call on all who name Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and every Bible-believing church on earth to join us in these acts or repentance, in ratifying this covenant with God and His Church, and in embracing these fundamental and non-negotiable truths and mandates, to the great end that God might be glorified and His will might be done.

Page 14

Benediction

May we live to glorify God. May we fellowship with Him eternally. May we offer ourselves a living sacrifice to God and our fellow men. May we be salt and light in the world. May the fruit of our labor, as much as is possible, be the working of God’s will on earth as it is in heaven. May God give us His strength, wisdom, holiness, justice, love and power in full measure. And may God multiply those who enter herein.

Appendix, Nature – Earth Charter

PREAMBLE

We stand at a critical moment in Earth's history, a time when humanity must choose its future. As the world becomes increasingly interdependent and fragile, the future at once

holds great peril and great promise. To move forward we must recognize that in the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one Earth community with a common destiny. We must join together to bring forth a sustainable global society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace. Towards this end, it is imperative that we, the peoples of Earth, declare our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life, and to future generations.

Earth, Our Home

Humanity is part of a vast evolving universe. Earth, our home, is alive with a unique community of life. The forces of nature make existence a demanding and uncertain adventure, but Earth has provided the conditions essential to life's evolution. The resilience of the community of life and the well-being of humanity depend upon preserving a healthy biosphere with all its ecological systems, a rich variety of plants and animals, fertile soils, pure waters, and clean air. The global environment with its finite resources is a common concern of all peoples. The protection of Earth's vitality, diversity, and beauty is a sacred trust.

The Global Situation

The dominant patterns of production and consumption are causing environmental devastation, the depletion of resources, and a massive extinction of species. Communities are being undermined. The benefits of development are not shared equitably and the gap between rich and poor is widening. Injustice, poverty, ignorance, and violent conflict are widespread and the cause of great suffering. An unprecedented rise in human population has overburdened ecological and social systems. The foundations of global security are threatened. These trends are perilous-but not inevitable.

The Challenges Ahead

The choice is ours: form a global partnership to care for Earth and one another or risk the destruction of ourselves and the diversity of life. Fundamental changes are needed in our values, institutions, and ways of living. We must realize that when basic needs have been met, human development is primarily about being more, not having more. We have the knowledge and technology to provide for all and to reduce our impacts on the environment. The emergence of a global civil society is creating new opportunities to build a democratic and humane world. Our environmental, economic, political, social, and spiritual challenges are interconnected, and together we can forge inclusive solutions.

Universal Responsibility

To realize these aspirations, we must decide to live with a sense of universal responsibility, identifying ourselves with the whole Earth community as well as our local communities. We are at once citizens of different nations and of one world in which the local and global are linked. Everyone shares responsibility for the present and future

well-being of the human family and the larger living world. The spirit of human solidarity and kinship with all life is strengthened when we live with reverence for the mystery of being, gratitude for the gift of life, and humility regarding the human place in nature.

We urgently need a shared vision of basic values to provide an ethical foundation for the emerging world community. Therefore, together in hope we affirm the following interdependent principles for a sustainable way of life as a common standard by which the conduct of all individuals, organizations, businesses, governments, and transnational institutions is to be guided and assessed.

PRINCIPLES

I. RESPECT AND CARE FOR THE COMMUNITY OF LIFE

1. Respect Earth and life in all its diversity.

a. Recognize that all beings are interdependent and every form of life has value regardless of its worth to human beings.

b. Affirm faith in the inherent dignity of all human beings and in the intellectual, artistic, ethical, and spiritual potential of humanity.

2. Care for the community of life with understanding, compassion, and love.

a. Accept that with the right to own, manage, and use natural resources comes the duty to prevent environmental harm and to protect the rights of people.

b. Affirm that with increased freedom, knowledge, and power comes increased responsibility to promote the common good.

3. Build democratic societies that are just, participatory, sustainable, and peaceful.

a. Ensure that communities at all levels guarantee human rights and fundamental freedoms and provide everyone an opportunity to realize his or her full potential.

b. Promote social and economic justice, enabling all to achieve a secure and meaningful livelihood that is ecologically responsible.

4. Secure Earth's bounty and beauty for present and future generations.

a. Recognize that the freedom of action of each generation is qualified by the needs of future generations.

b. Transmit to future generations values, traditions, and institutions that support the long-term flourishing of Earth's human and ecological communities.

In order to fulfill these four broad commitments, it is necessary to:

II. ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY

5. Protect and restore the integrity of Earth's ecological systems, with special concern for biological diversity and the natural processes that sustain life.

a. Adopt at all levels sustainable development plans and regulations that make environmental conservation and rehabilitation integral to all development initiatives.
b. Establish and safeguard viable nature and biosphere reserves, including wild lands and marine areas, to protect Earth's life support systems, maintain biodiversity, and preserve our natural heritage.
c. Promote the recovery of endangered species and ecosystems.
d. Control and eradicate non-native or genetically modified organisms harmful to native species and the environment, and prevent introduction of such harmful organisms.
e. Manage the use of renewable resources such as water, soil, forest products, and marine life in ways that do not exceed rates of regeneration and that protect the health of ecosystems.
f. Manage the extraction and use of non-renewable resources such as minerals and fossil fuels in ways that minimize depletion and cause no serious environmental damage.
6. Prevent harm as the best method of environmental protection and, when knowledge is limited, apply a precautionary approach.
a. Take action to avoid the possibility of serious or irreversible environmental harm even when scientific knowledge is incomplete or inconclusive.
b. Place the burden of proof on those who argue that a proposed activity will not cause significant harm, and make the responsible parties liable for environmental harm.
c. Ensure that decision making addresses the cumulative, long-term, indirect, long distance, and global consequences of human activities.
d. Prevent pollution of any part of the environment and allow no build-up of radioactive, toxic, or other hazardous substances.
e. Avoid military activities damaging to the environment.
7. Adopt patterns of production, consumption, and reproduction that safeguard Earth's regenerative capacities, human rights, and community well-being.
a. Reduce, reuse, and recycle the materials used in production and consumption systems, and ensure that residual waste can be assimilated by ecological systems.
b. Act with restraint and efficiency when using energy, and rely increasingly on renewable energy sources such as solar and wind.
c. Promote the development, adoption, and equitable transfer of environmentally sound technologies.
d. Internalize the full environmental and social costs of goods and services in the selling price, and enable consumers to identify products that meet the highest social and environmental standards.
e. Ensure universal access to health care that fosters reproductive health and responsible reproduction.
f. Adopt lifestyles that emphasize the quality of life and material sufficiency in a finite world.
8. Advance the study of ecological sustainability and promote the open exchange and wide application of the knowledge acquired.
a. Support international scientific and technical cooperation on sustainability, with special attention to the needs of developing nations. b. Recognize and preserve the traditional knowledge and spiritual wisdom in all cultures that contribute to environmental protection and human well-being. c. Ensure that information of vital importance to

human health and environmental protection, including genetic information, remains available in the public domain.

III. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE

9. Eradicate poverty as an ethical, social, and environmental imperative.
a. Guarantee the right to potable water, clean air, food security, uncontaminated soil, shelter, and safe sanitation, allocating the national and international resources required.
b. Empower every human being with the education and resources to secure a sustainable livelihood, and provide social security and safety nets for those who are unable to support themselves.
c. Recognize the ignored, protect the vulnerable, serve those who suffer, and enable them to develop their capacities and to pursue their aspirations.
10. Ensure that economic activities and institutions at all levels promote human development in an equitable and sustainable manner.
a. Promote the equitable distribution of wealth within nations and among nations.
b. Enhance the intellectual, financial, technical, and social resources of developing nations, and relieve them of onerous international debt.
c. Ensure that all trade supports sustainable resource use, environmental protection, and progressive labor standards.
d. Require multinational corporations and international financial organizations to act transparently in the public good, and hold them accountable for the consequences of their activities.
11. Affirm gender equality and equity as prerequisites to sustainable development and ensure universal access to education, health care, and economic opportunity.
a. Secure the human rights of women and girls and end all violence against them.
b. Promote the active participation of women in all aspects of economic, political, civil, social, and cultural life as full and equal partners, decision makers, leaders, and beneficiaries.
c. Strengthen families and ensure the safety and loving nurture of all family members.
12. Uphold the right of all, without discrimination, to a natural and social environment supportive of human dignity, bodily health, and spiritual well-being, with special attention to the rights of indigenous peoples and minorities.
a. Eliminate discrimination in all its forms, such as that based on race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, language, and national, ethnic or social origin. b. Affirm the right of indigenous peoples to their spirituality, knowledge, lands and resources and to their related practice of sustainable livelihoods. c. Honor and support the young people of our communities, enabling them to fulfill their essential role in creating sustainable societies.
d. Protect and restore outstanding places of cultural and spiritual significance.

IV. DEMOCRACY, NONVIOLENCE, AND PEACE

13. Strengthen democratic institutions at all levels, and provide transparency and accountability in governance, inclusive participation in decision making, and access to justice.
a. Uphold the right of everyone to receive clear and timely information on environmental matters and all development plans and activities which are likely to affect them or in which they have an interest.
b. Support local, regional and global civil society, and promote the meaningful participation of all interested individuals and organizations in decision making.
c. Protect the rights to freedom of opinion, expression, peaceful assembly, association, and dissent.
d. Institute effective and efficient access to administrative and independent judicial procedures, including remedies and redress for environmental harm and the threat of such harm.
e. Eliminate corruption in all public and private institutions.
f. Strengthen local communities, enabling them to care for their environments, and assign environmental responsibilities to the levels of government where they can be carried out most effectively.
14. Integrate into formal education and life-long learning the knowledge, values, and skills needed for a sustainable way of life.
a. Provide all, especially children and youth, with educational opportunities that empower them to contribute actively to sustainable development.
b. Promote the contribution of the arts and humanities as well as the sciences in sustainability education.
c. Enhance the role of the mass media in raising awareness of ecological and social challenges.
d. Recognize the importance of moral and spiritual education for sustainable living.
15. Treat all living beings with respect and consideration.
a. Prevent cruelty to animals kept in human societies and protect them from suffering.
b. Protect wild animals from methods of hunting, trapping, and fishing that cause extreme, prolonged, or avoidable suffering.
c. Avoid or eliminate to the full extent possible the taking or destruction of non-targeted species.
16. Promote a culture of tolerance, nonviolence, and peace.
a. Encourage and support mutual understanding, solidarity, and cooperation among all peoples and within and among nations.
b. Implement comprehensive strategies to prevent violent conflict and use collaborative problem solving to manage and resolve environmental conflicts and other disputes.
c. Demilitarize national security systems to the level of a non-provocative defense posture, and convert military resources to peaceful purposes, including ecological restoration.
d. Eliminate nuclear, biological, and toxic weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.
e. Ensure that the use of orbital and outer space supports environmental protection and peace.
f. Recognize that peace is the wholeness created by right relationships with oneself, other persons, other cultures, other life, Earth, and the larger whole of which all are a part.

THE WAY FORWARD

As never before in history, common destiny beckons us to seek a new beginning. Such renewal is the promise of these Earth Charter principles. To fulfill this promise, we must commit ourselves to adopt and promote the values and objectives of the Charter.

This requires a change of mind and heart. It requires a new sense of global interdependence and universal responsibility. We must imaginatively develop and apply the vision of a sustainable way of life locally, nationally, regionally, and globally. Our cultural diversity is a precious heritage and different cultures will find their own distinctive ways to realize the vision. We must deepen and expand the global dialogue that generated the Earth Charter, for we have much to learn from the ongoing collaborative search for truth and wisdom.

Life often involves tensions between important values. This can mean difficult choices. However, we must find ways to harmonize diversity with unity, the exercise of freedom with the common good, short-term objectives with long-term goals. Every individual, family, organization, and community has a vital role to play. The arts, sciences, religions, educational institutions, media, businesses, nongovernmental organizations, and governments are all called to offer creative leadership. The partnership of government, civil society, and business is essential for effective governance.

In order to build a sustainable global community, the nations of the world must renew their commitment to the United Nations, fulfill their obligations under existing international agreements, and support the implementation of Earth Charter principles with an international legally binding instrument on environment and development.

Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life.

Appendix, Politics – Declaration of Independence (partial)

WHEN in the Course of human Events, it becomes necessary for one People to dissolve the Political Bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the Powers of the Earth, the separate and equal Station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent Respect to the Opinions of Mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the Separation.
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 -- That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the Right of

the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its Foundation on such Principles, and organizing its Powers in such Form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient Causes; and accordingly all Experience hath shewn, that Mankind are more disposed to suffer, while Evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the Forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long Train of Abuses and Usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object, evinces a Design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their Right, it is their Duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future Security.

Appendix, Politics – US Constitution (portions)

We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Article I, Section 1. All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

Article II, Section 1. The executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his office during the term of four years, and, together with the Vice President, chosen for the same term, be elected …

Article III, Section 1. The judicial power of the United States, shall be vested in one Supreme Court, and in such inferior courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish. The judges, both of the supreme and inferior courts, shall hold their offices during good behaviour, and shall, at stated times, receive for their services, a compensation, which shall not be diminished during their continuance in office.

Appendix, Politics – Bill of Rights

Amendment I

Congress shall make no law respecting an 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 a redress of grievances.

Amendment II

A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.

Amendment III

No soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

Amendment IV

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

Amendment V

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the militia, when in actual service in time of war or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

Amendment VI

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the state and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defense.

Amendment VII

In suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise reexamined in any court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

Amendment VIII

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

Amendment IX

The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

Amendment X

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people.

Article I, Section 8. The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States; but all duties, imposts and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

To borrow money on the credit of the United States;

To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes;

To establish a uniform rule of naturalization, and uniform laws on the subject of bankruptcies throughout the United States;

To coin money, regulate the value thereof, and of foreign coin, and fix the standard of weights and measures;

To provide for the punishment of counterfeiting the securities and current coin of the United States;

To establish post offices and post roads;

To promote the progress of science and useful arts, by securing for limited times to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their respective writings and discoveries;

To constitute tribunals inferior to the Supreme Court;

To define and punish piracies and felonies committed on the high seas, and offenses against the law of nations;
To declare war, grant letters of marque and reprisal, and make rules concerning captures on land and water;
To raise and support armies, but no appropriation of money to that use shall be for a longer term than two years;
To provide and maintain a navy;
To make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces;
To provide for calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the union, suppress insurrections and repel invasions;
To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining, the militia, and for governing such part of them as may be employed in the service of the United States, reserving to the states respectively, the appointment of the officers, and the authority of training the militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress;
To exercise exclusive legislation in all cases whatsoever, over such District (not exceeding ten miles square) as may, by cession of particular states, and the acceptance of Congress, become the seat of the government of the United States, and to exercise like authority over all places purchased by the consent of the legislature of the state in which the same shall be, for the erection of forts, magazines, arsenals, dockyards, and other needful buildings;--And
To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.

Federalist Paper 45, by John Madison

The powers delegated by the proposed Constitution to the federal government are few and defined. Those which are to remain in the State governments are numerous and indefinite. The former will be exercised principally on external objects, as war, peace, negotiation, and foreign commerce; with which last the power of taxation will, for the most part, be connected. The powers reserved to the several States will extend to all the objects which, in the ordinary course of affairs, concern the lives, liberties, and properties of the people, and the internal order, improvement, and prosperity of the State.

The operations of the federal government will be most extensive and important in times of war and danger; those of the State governments, in times of peace and security. As the former periods will probably bear a small proportion to the latter, the State governments will here enjoy another advantage over the federal government. The more adequate, indeed, the federal powers may be rendered to the national defense, the less frequent will be those scenes of danger which might favor their ascendancy over the governments of the particular States.

Appendix, Politics – English Bill of Rights 1689

An Act Declaring the Rights and Liberties of the Subject and Settling the Succession of the Crown

Whereas the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons assembled at Westminster, lawfully, fully and freely representing all the estates of the people of this realm, did upon the thirteenth day of February in the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred eighty-eight [old style date] present unto their Majesties, then called and known by the names and style of William and Mary, prince and princess of Orange, being present in their proper persons, a certain declaration in writing made by the said Lords and Commons in the words following, viz.:

Whereas the late King James the Second, by the assistance of divers evil counsellors, judges and ministers employed by him, did endeavour to subvert and extirpate the Protestant religion and the laws and liberties of this kingdom;

By assuming and exercising a power of dispensing with and suspending of laws and the execution of laws without consent of Parliament;

By committing and prosecuting divers worthy prelates for humbly petitioning to be excused from concurring to the said assumed power;

By issuing and causing to be executed a commission under the great seal for erecting a court called the Court of Commissioners for Ecclesiastical Causes;

By levying money for and to the use of the Crown by pretence of prerogative for other time and in other manner than the same was granted by Parliament;

By raising and keeping a standing army within this kingdom in time of peace without consent of Parliament, and quartering soldiers contrary to law;

By causing several good subjects being Protestants to be disarmed at the same time when papists were both armed and employed contrary to law;

By violating the freedom of election of members to serve in Parliament;

By prosecutions in the Court of King's Bench for matters and causes cognizable only in Parliament, and by divers other arbitrary and illegal courses;

And whereas of late years partial corrupt and unqualified persons have been returned and served on juries in trials, and particularly divers jurors in trials for high treason which were not freeholders;

And excessive bail hath been required of persons committed in criminal cases to elude the benefit of the laws made for the liberty of the subjects;

And excessive fines have been imposed;

And illegal and cruel punishments inflicted;

And several grants and promises made of fines and forfeitures before any conviction or judgment against the persons upon whom the same were to be levied;

All which are utterly and directly contrary to the known laws and statutes and freedom of this realm;

And whereas the said late King James the Second having abdicated the government and the throne being thereby vacant, his Highness the prince of Orange (whom it hath pleased Almighty God to make the glorious instrument of delivering this kingdom from popery and arbitrary power) did (by the advice of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and divers principal persons of the Commons) cause letters to be written to the Lords Spiritual and Temporal being Protestants, and other letters to the several counties, cities, universities, boroughs and cinque ports, for the choosing of such persons to represent them as were of right to be sent to Parliament, to meet and sit at Westminster upon the two and twentieth day of January in this year one thousand six hundred eighty and eight [old style date], in order to such an establishment as that their religion, laws and liberties might not again be in danger of being subverted, upon which letters elections having been accordingly made;

And thereupon the said Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons, pursuant to their respective letters and elections, being now assembled in a full and free representative of this nation, taking into their most serious consideration the best means for attaining the ends aforesaid, do in the first place (as their ancestors in like case have usually done) for the vindicating and asserting their ancient rights and liberties declare

That the pretended power of suspending the laws or the execution of laws by regal authority without consent of Parliament is illegal;

That the pretended power of dispensing with laws or the execution of laws by regal authority, as it hath been assumed and exercised of late, is illegal;

That the commission for erecting the late Court of Commissioners for Ecclesiastical Causes, and all other commissions and courts of like nature, are illegal and pernicious;

That levying money for or to the use of the Crown by pretence of prerogative, without grant of Parliament, for longer time, or in other manner than the same is or shall be granted, is illegal;

That it is the right of the subjects to petition the king, and all commitments and prosecutions for such petitioning are illegal;

That the raising or keeping a standing army within the kingdom in time of peace, unless it be with consent of Parliament, is against law;

That the subjects which are Protestants may have arms for their defence suitable to their conditions and as allowed by law;

That election of members of Parliament ought to be free;

That the freedom of speech and debates or proceedings in Parliament ought not to be impeached or questioned in any court or place out of Parliament;

That excessive bail ought not to be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted;

That jurors ought to be duly impanelled and returned, and jurors which pass upon men in trials for high treason ought to be freeholders;

That all grants and promises of fines and forfeitures of particular persons before conviction are illegal and void;

And that for redress of all grievances, and for the amending, strengthening and preserving of the laws, Parliaments ought to be held frequently.

And they do claim, demand and insist upon all and singular the premises as their undoubted rights and liberties, and that no declarations, judgments, doings or proceedings to the prejudice of the people in any of the said premises ought in any wise to be drawn hereafter into consequence or example; to which demand of their rights they are particularly encouraged by the declaration of his Highness the prince of Orange as being the only means for obtaining a full redress and remedy therein. Having therefore an entire confidence that his said Highness the prince of Orange will perfect the deliverance so far advanced by him, and will still preserve them from the violation of their rights which they have here asserted, and from all other attempts upon their religion, rights and liberties, the said Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons assembled at Westminster do resolve that William and Mary, prince and princess of Orange, be and be declared king and queen of England, France and Ireland and the dominions thereunto belonging, to hold the crown and royal dignity of the said kingdoms and dominions to them, the said prince and princess, during their lives and the life of the survivor to them, and that the sole and full exercise of the regal power be only in and executed by the said prince of Orange in the names of the said prince and princess during their joint lives, and after their deceases the said crown and royal dignity of the same kingdoms and dominions to be to the heirs of the body of the said princess, and for default of such issue to the Princess Anne of Denmark and the heirs of her body, and for default of such issue to the heirs of the body of the said prince of Orange. And the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons do pray the said prince and princess to accept the same accordingly.

And that the oaths hereafter mentioned be taken by all persons of whom the oaths have allegiance and supremacy might be required by law, instead of them; and that the said oaths of allegiance and supremacy be abrogated.

I, A.B., do sincerely promise and swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to their Majesties King William and Queen Mary. So help me God.

I, A.B., do swear that I do from my heart abhor, detest and abjure as impious and heretical this damnable doctrine and position, that princes excommunicated or deprived by the Pope or any authority of the see of Rome may be deposed or murdered by their subjects or any other whatsoever. And I do declare that no foreign prince, person, prelate, state or potentate hath or ought to have any jurisdiction, power, superiority, pre-eminence or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm. So help me God.

Upon which their said Majesties did accept the crown and royal dignity of the kingdoms of England, France and Ireland, and the dominions thereunto belonging, according to the resolution and desire of the said Lords and Commons contained in the said declaration. And thereupon their Majesties were pleased that the said Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons, being the two Houses of Parliament, should continue to sit, and with their Majesties' royal concurrence make effectual provision for the settlement of the religion, laws and liberties of this kingdom, so that the same for the future might not be in danger again of being subverted, to which the said Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons did agree, and proceed to act accordingly. Now in pursuance of the premises the said Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons in Parliament assembled, for the ratifying, confirming and establishing the said declaration and the articles, clauses, matters and things therein contained by the force of law made in due form by authority of Parliament, do pray that it may be declared and enacted that all and singular the rights and liberties asserted and claimed in the said declaration are the true, ancient and indubitable rights and liberties of the people of this kingdom, and so shall be esteemed, allowed, adjudged, deemed and taken to be; and that all and every the particulars aforesaid shall be firmly and strictly holden and observed as they are expressed in the said declaration, and all officers and ministers whatsoever shall serve their Majesties and their successors according to the same in all time to come. And the said Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons, seriously considering how it hath pleased Almighty God in his marvellous providence and merciful goodness to this nation to provide and preserve their said Majesties' royal persons most happily to reign over us upon the throne of their ancestors, for which they render unto him from the bottom of their hearts their humblest thanks and praises, do truly, firmly, assuredly and in the sincerity of their hearts think, and do hereby recognize, acknowledge and declare, that King James the Second having abdicated the government, and their Majesties having accepted the crown and royal dignity as aforesaid, their said Majesties did become, were, are and of right ought to be by the laws of this realm our sovereign liege lord and lady, king and queen of England, France and Ireland and the dominions thereunto belonging, in and to whose princely persons the royal state, crown and dignity of the said realms with all honours, styles, titles, regalities, prerogatives, powers, jurisdictions and authorities to the same belonging and appertaining are most fully, rightfully and entirely invested and incorporated, united and annexed. And for preventing all questions and divisions in this realm by reason of any pretended titles to the crown, and for preserving a certainty in the succession thereof, in and upon which the unity, peace, tranquility and safety of this nation doth under God wholly consist and depend, the said Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons do beseech their Majesties that it may be enacted, established and declared, that the crown and regal government of the said kingdoms and dominions, with all and singular the premises thereunto belonging and appertaining, shall be and continue to their said Majesties and the survivor of them

during their lives and the life of the survivor of them, and that the entire, perfect and full exercise of the regal power and government be only in and executed by his Majesty in the names of both their Majesties during their joint lives; and after their deceases the said crown and premises shall be and remain to the heirs of the body of her Majesty, and for default of such issue to her Royal Highness the Princess Anne of Denmark and the heirs of the body of his said Majesty; and thereunto the said Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons do in the name of all the people aforesaid most humbly and faithfully submit themselves, their heirs and posterities for ever, and do faithfully promise that they will stand to, maintain and defend their said Majesties, and also the limitation and succession of the crown herein specified and contained, to the utmost of their powers with their lives and estates against all persons whatsoever that shall attempt anything to the contrary. And whereas it hath been found by experience that it is inconsistent with the safety and welfare of this Protestant kingdom to be governed by a popish prince, or by any king or queen marrying a papist, the said Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons do further pray that it may be enacted, that all and every person and persons that is, are or shall be reconciled to or shall hold communion with the see or Church of Rome, or shall profess the popish religion, or shall marry a papist, shall be excluded and be for ever incapable to inherit, possess or enjoy the crown and government of this realm and Ireland and the dominions thereunto belonging or any part of the same, or to have, use or exercise any regal power, authority or jurisdiction within the same; and in all and every such case or cases the people of these realms shall be and are hereby absolved of their allegiance; and the said crown and government shall from time to time descend to and be enjoyed by such person or persons being Protestants as should have inherited and enjoyed the same in case the said person or persons so reconciled, holding communion or professing or marrying as aforesaid were naturally dead; and that every king and queen of this realm who at any time hereafter shall come to and succeed in the imperial crown of this kingdom shall on the first day of the meeting of the first Parliament next after his or her coming to the crown, sitting in his or her throne in the House of Peers in the presence of the Lords and Commons therein assembled, or at his or her coronation before such person or persons who shall administer the coronation oath to him or her at the time of his or her taking the said oath (which shall first happen), make, subscribe and audibly repeat the declaration mentioned in the statute made in the thirtieth year of the reign of King Charles the Second entitled, _An Act for the more effectual preserving the king's person and government by disabling papists from sitting in either House of Parliament._ But if it shall happen that such king or queen upon his or her succession to the crown of this realm shall be under the age of twelve years, then every such king or queen shall make, subscribe and audibly repeat the same declaration at his or her coronation or the first day of the meeting of the first Parliament as aforesaid which shall first happen after such king or queen shall have attained the said age of twelve years. All which their Majesties are contented and pleased shall be declared, enacted and established by authority of this present Parliament, and shall stand, remain and be the law of this realm for ever; and the same are by their said Majesties, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons in Parliament assembled and by the authority of the same, declared, enacted and established accordingly.

II. And be it further declared and enacted by the authority aforesaid, that from and after this present session of Parliament no dispensation by _non obstante_ of or to any statute or any part thereof shall be allowed, but that the same shall be held void and of no effect, except a dispensation be allowed of in such statute, and except in such cases as shall be specially provided for by one or more bill or bills to be passed during this present session of Parliament.

III. Provided that no charter or grant or pardon granted before the three and twentieth day of October in the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred eighty-nine shall be any ways impeached or invalidated by this Act, but that the same shall be and remain of the same force and effect in law and no other than as if this Act had never been made.

Appendix, Politics – French Declaration of the Rights of Man, 1789

Approved by the National Assembly of France, August 26, 1789

The representatives of the French people, organized as a National Assembly, believing that the ignorance, neglect, or contempt of the rights of man are the sole cause of public calamities and of the corruption of governments, have determined to set forth in a solemn declaration the natural, unalienable, and sacred rights of man, in order that this declaration, being constantly before all the members of the Social body, shall remind them continually of their rights and duties; in order that the acts of the legislative power, as well as those of the executive power, may be compared at any moment with the objects and purposes of all political institutions and may thus be more respected, and, lastly, in order that the grievances of the citizens, based hereafter upon simple and incontestable principles, shall tend to the maintenance of the constitution and redound to the happiness of all. Therefore the National Assembly recognizes and proclaims, in the presence and under the auspices of the Supreme Being, the following rights of man and of the citizen:

Articles:
1. Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions may be founded only upon the general good.

2. The aim of all political association is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man. These rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression.

3. The principle of all sovereignty resides essentially in the nation. No body nor individual may exercise any authority which does not proceed directly from the nation.

4. Liberty consists in the freedom to do everything which injures no one else; hence the exercise of the natural rights of each man has no limits except those which assure to the other members of the society the enjoyment of the same rights. These limits can only be determined by law.

5. Law can only prohibit such actions as are hurtful to society. Nothing may be prevented which is not forbidden by law, and no one may be forced to do anything not provided for by law.

6. Law is the expression of the general will. Every citizen has a right to participate personally, or through his representative, in its foundation. It must be the same for all, whether it protects or punishes. All citizens, being equal in the eyes of the law, are equally eligible to all dignities and to all public positions and occupations, according to their abilities, and without distinction except that of their virtues and talents.

7. No person shall be accused, arrested, or imprisoned except in the cases and according to the forms prescribed by law. Any one soliciting, transmitting, executing, or causing to be executed, any arbitrary order, shall be punished. But any citizen summoned or arrested in virtue of the law shall submit without delay, as resistance constitutes an offense.

8. The law shall provide for such punishments only as are strictly and obviously necessary, and no one shall suffer punishment except it be legally inflicted in virtue of a law passed and promulgated before the commission of the offense.

9. As all persons are held innocent until they shall have been declared guilty, if arrest shall be deemed indispensable, all harshness not essential to the securing of the prisoner's person shall be severely repressed by law.

10. No one shall be disquieted on account of his opinions, including his religious views, provided their manifestation does not disturb the public order established by law.

11. The free communication of ideas and opinions is one of the most precious of the rights of man. Every citizen may, accordingly, speak, write, and print with freedom, but shall be responsible for such abuses of this freedom as shall be defined by law.

12. The security of the rights of man and of the citizen requires public military forces. These forces are, therefore, established for the good of all and not for the personal advantage of those to whom they shall be intrusted.

13. A common contribution is essential for the maintenance of the public forces and for the cost of administration. This should be equitably distributed among all the citizens in proportion to their means.

14. All the citizens have a right to decide, either personally or by their representatives, as to the necessity of the public contribution; to grant this freely; to know to what uses it is put; and to fix the proportion, the mode of assessment and of collection and the duration of the taxes.

15. Society has the right to require of every public agent an account of his administration.

16. A society in which the observance of the law is not assured, nor the separation of powers defined, has no constitution at all.

17. Since property is an inviolable and sacred right, no one shall be deprived thereof except where public necessity, legally determined, shall clearly demand it, and then only on condition that the owner shall have been previously and equitably indemnified.

Appendix, Politics – UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights - 1948

On December 10, 1948 the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights the full text of which appears in the following pages. Following this historic act the Assembly called upon all Member countries to publicize the text of the Declaration and "to cause it to be disseminated, displayed, read and expounded principally in schools and other educational institutions, without distinction based on the political status of countries or territories."
PREAMBLE
Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in co-operation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge,

Now, Therefore THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY proclaims THIS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS as a common standard of achievement for all

peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

Article 1.
All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2.
Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3.
Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 4.
No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5.
No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 6.
Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7.
All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 8.
Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

Article 9.
No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 10.

Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 11.
(1) Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.

(2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

Article 12.
No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 13.
(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.

(2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Article 14.
(1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.

(2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 15.
(1) Everyone has the right to a nationality.

(2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

Article 16.
(1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.

(2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

(3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

Article 17.
(1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.

(2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 18.
Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 19.
Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20.
(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

(2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

Article 21.
(1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

(2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.

(3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

Article 22.
Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

Article 23.
(1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.

(2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.

(3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.

(4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

Article 24.
Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

Article 25.
(1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

(2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

Article 26.
(1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

(2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

(3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Article 27.
(1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

(2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

Article 28.

Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

Article 29.
(1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.

(2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.

(3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 30.
Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

Appendix, Politics - The United Nations
INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS, 1976

PREAMBLE
The States Parties to the present Covenant,
Considering that, in accordance with the principles proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Recognizing that these rights derive from the inherent dignity of the human person,

Recognizing that, in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the ideal of free human beings enjoying civil and political freedom and freedom from fear and want can only be achieved if conditions are created whereby everyone may enjoy his civil and political rights, as well as his economic, social and cultural rights,

Considering the obligation of States under the Charter of the United Nations to promote universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and freedoms,

Realizing that the individual, having duties to other individuals and to the community to which he belongs, is under a responsibility to strive for the promotion and observance of the rights recognized in the present Covenant,

Agree upon the following articles:

PART 1

Article 1

All peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

All peoples may, for their own ends, freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources without prejudice to any obligations arising out of international economic co-operation, based upon the principle of mutual benefit, and international law. In no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence.

The States Parties to the present Covenant, including those having responsibility for the administration of Non-Self-Governing and Trust Territories, shall promote the realization of the right of self-determination, and shall respect that right, in conformity with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.

PART II

Article 2

Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to respect and to ensure to all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction the rights recognized in the present Covenant, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Where not already provided for by existing legislative or other measures, each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to take the necessary steps. in accordance with its constitutional processes and with the provisions of the present Covenant, to adopt such legislative or other measures as may be necessary to give effect to the rights recognized in the present Covenant.

Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes:

To ensure that any person whose rights or freedoms as herein recognized are violated shall have an effective remedy, notwithstanding that the violation has been committed by persons acting in an official capacity; to ensure that any person claiming such a remedy shall have his rights thereto determined by competent judicial, administrative or legislative authorities, or by any other competent authority provided for by the legal system of the State, and to develop the possibilities of judicial remedy;

To ensure that the competent authorities shall enforce such remedies when granted.

Article 3

The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to ensure the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all civil and political rights set forth in the present Covenant.

Article 4

In time of public emergency which threatens the life of the nation and the existence of which is officially proclaimed, the States Parties to the present Covenant may take measures derogating from their obligations under the present Covenant to the extent strictly required by the exigencies of the situation, provided that such measures are not

inconsistent with their other obligations under international law and do not involve discrimination solely on the ground of race, colour, sex, language, religion or social origin.

No derogation from articles 6, 7, 8 (paragraphs 1 and 2), 11, 15, 16 and 18 may be made under this provision.

Any State Party to the present Covenant availing itself of the right of derogation shall immediately inform the other States Parties to the present Covenant, through the intermediary of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, of the provisions from which it has derogated and of the reasons by which it was actuated. A further communication shall be made, through the same intermediary, on the date on which it terminates such derogation.

Article 5

Nothing in the present Covenant may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms recognized herein or at their limitation to a greater extent than is provided for in the present Covenant.

There shall be no restriction upon or derogation from any of the fundamental human rights recognized or existing in any State Party to the present Covenant pursuant to law, conventions, regulations or custom on the pretext that the present Covenant does not recognize such rights or that it recognizes them to a lesser extent.

PART III

Article 6

Every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life.

In countries which have not abolished the death penalty, sentence of death may be imposed only for the most serious crimes in accordance with the law in force at the time of the commission of the crime and not contrary to the provisions of the present Covenant and to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. This penalty can only be carried out pursuant to a final judgment rendered by a competent court.

When deprivation of life constitutes the crime of genocide, it is understood that nothing in this article shall authorize any State Party to the present Covenant to derogate in any way from any obligation assumed under the provisions of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

Anyone sentenced to death shall have the right to seek pardon or commutation of the sentence. Amnesty, pardon or commutation of the sentence of death may be granted in all cases.

Sentence of death shall not be imposed for crimes committed by persons below eighteen years of age and shall not be carried out on pregnant women.

Nothing in this article shall be invoked to delay or to prevent the abolition of capital punishment by any State Party to the present Covenant.

Article 7

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. In particular, no one shall be subjected without his free consent to medical or scientific experimentation.

Article 8
No one shall be held in slavery; slavery and the slave-trade in all their forms shall be prohibited.
No one shall be held in servitude.

No one shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labour;
Paragraph 3(a) shall not be held to preclude, in countries where imprisonment with hard labour may be imposed as a punishment for a crime, the performance of hard labour in pursuance of a sentence to such punishment by a competent court;
For the purpose of this paragraph the term "forced or compulsory labour" shall not include:
Any work or service, not referred to in subparagraph (b), normally required of a person who is under detention in consequence of a lawful order of a court, or of a person during conditional release from such detention;
Any service of a military character and, in countries where conscientious objection is recognized, any national service required by law of conscientious objectors;
Any service exacted in cases of emergency or calamity threatening the life or well-being of the community;
Any work or service which forms part of normal civil obligations.
Article 9
Everyone has the right to liberty and security of person. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention. No one shall be deprived of his liberty except on such grounds and in accordance with such procedure as are established by law.
Anyone who is arrested shall be informed, at the time of arrest, of the reasons for his arrest and shall be promptly informed of any charges against him.
Anyone arrested or detained on a criminal charge shall be brought promptly before a judge or other officer authorized by law to exercise judicial power and shall be entitled to trial within a reasonable time or to release. It shall not be the general rule that persons awaiting trial shall be detained in custody, but release may be subject to guarantees to appear for trial, at any other stage of the judicial proceedings, and, should occasion arise, for execution of the judgment.
Anyone who is deprived of his liberty by arrest or detention shall be entitled to take proceedings before a court, in order that that court may decide without delay on the lawfulness of his detention and order his release if the detention is not lawful.
Anyone who has been the victim of unlawful arrest or detention shall have an enforceable right to compensation.
Article 10
All persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person.

Accused persons shall, save in exceptional circumstances, be segregated from convicted persons and shall be subject to separate treatment appropriate to their status as unconvicted persons;
Accused juvenile persons shall be separated from adults and brought as speedily as possible for adjudication.

The penitentiary system shall comprise treatment of prisoners the essential aim of which shall be their reformation and social rehabilitation. Juvenile offenders shall be segregated from adults and be accorded treatment appropriate to their age and legal status.

Article 11

No one shall be imprisoned merely on the ground of inability to fulfill a contractual obligation.

Article 12

Everyone lawfully within the territory of a State shall, within that territory, have the right to liberty of movement and freedom to choose his residence.

Everyone shall be free to leave any country, including his own.

The above-mentioned rights shall not be subject to any restrictions except those which are provided by law, are necessary to protect national security, public order (ordre public), public health or morals or the rights and freedoms of others, and are consistent with the other rights recognized in the present Covenant.

No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of the right to enter his own country.

Article 13

An alien lawfully in the territory of a State Party to the present Covenant may expelled therefrom only in pursuance of a decision reached in accordance with law and shall, except where compelling reasons of national security otherwise require, be allowed to submit the reasons against his expulsion and to have his case reviewed by, and be represented for the purpose before, the competent authority or a person or persons especially designated by the competent authority.

Article 14

All persons shall be equal before the courts and tribunals. In the determination of any criminal charge against him, or of his rights and obligations in a suit at law, everyone shall be entitled to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal established by law. The Press and the public may be excluded from all or part of a trial for reasons of morals, public order (ordre public) or national security in a democratic society, or when the interest of the private lives of the parties so requires, or to the extent strictly necessary in the opinion of the court in special circumstances where publicity would prejudice the interests of justice; but any judgment rendered in a criminal case or in a suit at law shall be made public except where the interest of juvenile persons otherwise requires or the proceedings concern matrimonial disputes or the guardianship of children.

Everyone charged with a criminal offence shall have the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law.

In the determination of any criminal charge against him, everyone shall be entitled to the following minimum guarantees, in full equality:

To be informed promptly and in detail in a language which he understands of the nature and cause of the charge against him;

To have adequate time and facilities for the preparation of his defence and to communicate with counsel of his own choosing;

To be tried without undue delay;

To be tried in his presence, and to defend himself in person or through legal assistance of his own choosing; to be informed, if he does not have legal assistance, of this right; and to have legal assistance assigned to him, in any case where the interests of justice so require, and without payment by him in any such case if he does not have sufficient means to pay for it;
To examine, or have examined, the witnesses against him and to obtain the attendance and examination of witnesses on his behalf under the same conditions as witnesses against him;
To have the free assistance of an interpreter if he cannot understand or speak the language used in court;
Not to be compelled to testify against himself or to confess guilt.
In the case of juvenile persons, the procedure shall be such as will take account of their age and the desirability of promoting their rehabilitation.
Everyone convicted of a crime shall have the right to his conviction and sentence being reviewed by a higher tribunal according to law.
When a person has by a final decision been convicted of a criminal offence and when subsequently his conviction has been reversed or he has been pardoned on the ground that a new or newly discovered fact shows conclusively that there has been a miscarriage of justice, the person who has suffered punishment as a result of such conviction shall be compensated according to law, unless it is proved that the non-disclosure of the unknown fact in time is wholly or partly attributable to him.
No one shall be liable to be tried or punished again for an offence for which he has already been finally convicted or acquitted in accordance with the law and penal procedure of each country.
Article 15
No one shall be held guilty of any criminal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a criminal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time when the criminal offence was committed. if, subsequent to the commission of the offence, provision is made by law for the imposition of a lighter penalty, the offender shall benefit thereby.
Nothing in this article shall prejudice the trial and punishment of any person for any act or omission which, at the time when it was committed, was criminal according to the general principles of law recognized by the community of nations.
Article 16
Everyone shall have the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 17
No one shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his honour and reputation.
Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.
Article 18
Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching.

No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice.
Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health, or morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.
The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to have respect for the liberty of parents and, when applicable, legal guardians to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions.
Article 19
Everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference.
Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.
The exercise of the rights provided for in paragraph 2 of this article carries with it special duties and responsibilities. It may therefore be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary:
For respect of the rights or reputations of others;
For the protection of national security or of public order (ordre public), or of public health or morals.
Article 20
Any propaganda for war shall be prohibited by law.
Any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law.
Article 21
The right of peaceful assembly shall be recognized. No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of this right other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order (ordre public), the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

Article 22
Everyone shall have the right to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and join trade unions for the protection of his interests.
No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of this right other than those which are prescribed by law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order (ordre public), the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. This article shall not prevent the imposition of lawful restrictions on members of the armed forces and of the police in their exercise of this right.
Nothing in this article shall authorize States Parties to the International Labour Organization Convention of 1948 concerning Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize to take legislative measures which would prejudice, or to apply the law in such a manner as to prejudice, the guarantees provided for in that Convention.
Article 23
The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

The right of men and women of marriageable age to marry and to found a family shall be recognized.
No marriage shall be entered into without the free and full consent of the intending spouses.
States Parties to the present Covenant shall take appropriate steps to ensure equally of rights and responsibilities of spouses as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution. In the case of dissolution, provision shall be made for the necessary protection of any children.
Article 24
Every child shall have, without any discrimination as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, national or social origin, property or birth, the right to such measures of protection as are required by his status as a minor, on the part of his family, society and the State.
Every child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have a name.
Every child has the right to acquire a nationality.
Article 25
Every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity, without any of the distinctions mentioned in article 2 and without unreasonable restrictions:

To take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives;
To vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot, guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors;
To have access, on general terms of equality, to public service in his country.
Article 26
All persons are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection of the law. In this respect, the law shall prohibit any discrimination and guarantee to all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Article 27
In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language.

PART IV – establishes the Human Rights Committee, its duties and functions

PART V
Article 46
Nothing in the present Covenant shall be interpreted as impairing the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and of the constitutions of the specialized agencies which define the respective responsibilities of the various organs of the United Nations and of specialized agencies in regard to the matters dealt with in the present Covenant.

Article 47
Nothing in the present Covenant shall be interpreted as impairing the inherent right of all peoples to enjoy and utilize fully and freely their natural wealth and resources.

PART VI – deals with signatures of members of the UN who sign the covenant.

Appendix, Politics – UN Declaration on the Elimination of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, 1981

Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief
Proclaimed by General Assembly resolution 36/55 of 25 November 1981
The General Assembly,
Considering that one of the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations is that of the dignity and equality inherent in all human beings, and that all Member States have pledged themselves to take joint and separate action in co-operation with the Organization to promote and encourage universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion,
Considering that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenants on Human Rights proclaim the principles of nondiscrimination and equality before the law and the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief,

Considering that the disregard and infringement of human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular of the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or whatever belief, have brought, directly or indirectly, wars and great suffering to mankind, especially where they serve as a means of foreign interference in the internal affairs of other States and amount to kindling hatred between peoples and nations,

Considering that religion or belief, for anyone who professes either, is one of the fundamental elements in his conception of life and that freedom of religion or belief should be fully respected and guaranteed,

Considering that it is essential to promote understanding, tolerance and respect in matters relating to freedom of religion and belief and to ensure that the use of religion or belief for ends inconsistent with the Charter of the United Nations, other relevant instruments of the United Nations and the purposes and principles of the present Declaration is inadmissible,

Convinced that freedom of religion and belief should also contribute to the attainment of the goals of world peace, social justice and friendship among peoples and to the elimination of ideologies or practices of colonialism and racial discrimination,

Noting with satisfaction the adoption of several, and the coming into force of some, conventions, under the aegis of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies, for the elimination of various forms of discrimination,

Concerned by manifestations of intolerance and by the existence of discrimination in matters of religion or belief still in evidence in some areas of the world,

Resolved to adopt all necessary measures for the speedy elimination of such intolerance in all its forms and manifestations and to prevent and combat discrimination on the ground of religion or belief,

Proclaims this Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief:

Article 1
1. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom to have a religion or whatever belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching.
2. No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have a religion or belief of his choice.

3. Freedom to manifest one's religion or belief may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

Article 2
1. No one shall be subject to discrimination by any State, institution, group of persons, or person on the grounds of religion or other belief.
2. For the purposes of the present Declaration, the expression "intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief" means any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on religion or belief and having as its purpose or as its effect nullification or impairment of the recognition, enjoyment or exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis.

Article 3
Discrimination between human being on the grounds of religion or belief constitutes an affront to human dignity and a disavowal of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and shall be condemned as a violation of the human rights and fundamental freedoms proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and enunciated in detail in the International Covenants on Human Rights, and as an obstacle to friendly and peaceful relations between nations.
Article 4
1. All States shall take effective measures to prevent and eliminate discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief in the recognition, exercise and enjoyment of human rights

and fundamental freedoms in all fields of civil, economic, political, social and cultural life.
2. All States shall make all efforts to enact or rescind legislation where necessary to prohibit any such discrimination, and to take all appropriate measures to combat intolerance on the grounds of religion or other beliefs in this matter.

Article 5
1. The parents or, as the case may be, the legal guardians of the child have the right to organize the life within the family in accordance with their religion or belief and bearing in mind the moral education in which they believe the child should be brought up.
2. Every child shall enjoy the right to have access to education in the matter of religion or belief in accordance with the wishes of his parents or, as the case may be, legal guardians, and shall not be compelled to receive teaching on religion or belief against the wishes of his parents or legal guardians, the best interests of the child being the guiding principle.

3. The child shall be protected from any form of discrimination on the ground of religion or belief. He shall be brought up in a spirit of understanding, tolerance, friendship among peoples, peace and universal brotherhood, respect for freedom of religion or belief of others, and in full consciousness that his energy and talents should be devoted to the service of his fellow men.

4. In the case of a child who is not under the care either of his parents or of legal guardians, due account shall be taken of their expressed wishes or of any other proof of their wishes in the matter of religion or belief, the best interests of the child being the guiding principle. 5. Practices of a religion or belief in which a child is brought up must not be injurious to his physical or mental health or to his full development, taking into account article 1, paragraph 3, of the present Declaration.

Article 6
In accordance with article I of the present Declaration, and subject to the provisions of article 1, paragraph 3, the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief shall include, inter alia, the following freedoms:
(a) To worship or assemble in connection with a religion or belief, and to establish and maintain places for these purposes;
(b) To establish and maintain appropriate charitable or humanitarian institutions;

(c) To make, acquire and use to an adequate extent the necessary articles and materials related to the rites or customs of a religion or belief;

(d) To write, issue and disseminate relevant publications in these areas;

(e) To teach a religion or belief in places suitable for these purposes;

(f) To solicit and receive voluntary financial and other contributions from individuals and institutions;

(g) To train, appoint, elect or designate by succession appropriate leaders called for by the requirements and standards of any religion or belief;

(h) To observe days of rest and to celebrate holidays and ceremonies in accordance with the precepts of one's religion or belief;

(i) To establish and maintain communications with individuals and communities in matters of religion and belief at the national and international levels.

Article 7
The rights and freedoms set forth in the present Declaration shall be accorded in national legislation in such a manner that everyone shall be able to avail himself of such rights and freedoms in practice.
Article 8
Nothing in the present Declaration shall be construed as restricting or derogating from any right defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenants on Human Rights.

Appendix, World Community – UN International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, 1966 (but not yet ratified)

The United Nations
INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON
ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

PREAMBLE
The States Parties to the present Covenant
Considering that, in accordance with the principles proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all the members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in world,

Recognizing that these rights derive from the inherent dignity of the human person,

Recognizing that, in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the ideal of free human beings enjoying freedom from fear and want can only be achieved if conditions are created whereby everyone my enjoy his economic, social and cultural rights, as well as his civil and political rights and freedom,

Realizing that the individual, having duties to other individuals and to the community to which he belongs, is under a responsibility to strive for the promotion and observance of the rights recognized in the present Covenant,

Agree upon the following articles:

PART I

Article 1

All peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

All peoples may, for their own ends, freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources without prejudice to any obligations arising out of international economic co-operation, based upon the principle of mutual benefit, and international law. In no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence.

The States Parties to the present Covenant, including those having responsibility for the administration of Non-Self-Governing and Trust Territories, shall promote the realization of the right of self-determination, and shall respect that right, in conformity with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.

PART II

Article 2

Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to take steps, individually and through international assistance and co-operation, especially economic and technical, to the maximum of its available resources, with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the rights recognized in the present Covenant by all appropriate means, including particularly the adoption of legislative measures.

The States Parties to present Covenant undertake to guarantee that the rights enunciated in the present Covenant will be exercised without discrimination of any kind as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Developing countries, with due regard to human rights and their national economy, may determine to what extent they would guarantee the economic rights recognized in the present Covenant to non-nationals.

Article 3

The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to ensure the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights set forth in the present Covenant.

Article 4

The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize that, in the enjoyment of those rights provided by the State in conformity with the present Covenant, the State may subject such rights only to such limitations as are determined by law only in so far as this may be compatible with the nature of these rights and solely for the purpose of promoting the general welfare in a democratic society.

Article 5

Nothing in the present Covenant may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights or freedoms recognized herein, or at their limitation to greater extent than is provided for in the present Covenant.

No restriction upon or derogation from any of the fundamental human rights recognized or existing in any country in virtue of law, conventions, regulations or custom shall be admitted on the pretext that the present Covenant does not recognize such rights or that it recognizes them to a lesser extent.

PART III

Article 6

The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right to work, which includes the right of everyone to the opportunity to gain his living by work which he freely chooses or accepts, and will take appropriate steps to safeguard this right.

The Steps to be taken by a State Party to the present Covenant to achieve the full realization of this right shall include technical and vocational guidance and training programmes, policies and techniques to achieve steady economic, social and cultural development and full and productive employment under conditions safeguarding fundamental political and economic freedoms to the individual.

Article 7

The States to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of just and favourable conditions of work which ensure, in particular:

Remuneration which provides all workers, as a minimum, with:

Fair wages and equal remuneration for work of equal value without distinction of any kind, in particular women being guaranteed conditions of work not inferior to those enjoyed by men, with equal pay for equal work;

A decent living for themselves and their families in accordance with the provisions of the present Covenant;

Safe and healthy working conditions;

Equal opportunity for everyone to be promoted in his employment to an appropriate higher level, subject to no considerations other than those of seniority and competence;

Rest, leisure and reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay, as well as remuneration for public holidays.

Article 8

The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to ensure:

The right of everyone to form trade unions and join the trade union of his choice, subject only to the rules of the organization concerned, for the promotion and protection of his economic and social interests. No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of this right other than those prescribed by law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public order or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others;

The right of trade unions to establish national federations of confederations and the right of the latter to form or join international trade-union organizations;

The right of trade unions to function freely subject to no limitations other than those prescribed by law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public order or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others;

The right to strike, provided that it is exercised in conformity with the laws of the particular country.

This article shall not prevent the imposition of lawful restrictions on the exercise of these rights by members of the armed forces or of the police or of the administration of the State.
Nothing in this article shall authorize States Parties to the International Labour Organization Convention of 1948 concerning Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize to take legislative measures which would prejudice, or apply the law in such a manner as would prejudice, the guarantees provided for in the Convention.
Article 9
The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to social security, including social insurance.

Article 10
The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize that:

The widest possible protection and assistance should be accorded to the family, which is the natural and fundamental group unit of society, particularly for its establishment and while it is responsible for the care and education of dependent children. Marriage must be entered into with the free consent of the intending spouses.
Special protection should be accorded to mothers during a reasonable period before and after childbirth. During such period working mothers should be accorded paid leave or leave with adequate social security benefits.
Special measures of protection and assistance should be taken on behalf of all children and young persons without any discrimination for reasons of parentage or other conditions. Children and young persons should be protected from economic and social exploitation. Their employment in work harmful to their morals or health or dangerous to life or likely to hamper their normal development should be punishable by law. States should also set age limits below which the paid employment of child labour should be prohibited and punishable by law.
Article 11
The States Parties to present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. The States Parties will take appropriate steps to ensure the international co-operation based on free consent.
The States Parties to present Covenant, recognizing the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger, shall take, individually and through international co-operation, the measures, including specific programmes, which are needed:
To improve methods of production, conservation and distribution of food by making full use of technical and scientific knowledge, by disseminating knowledge of the principles of nutrition and by developing or reforming agrarian systems in such a way as to achieve the most efficient development and utilization of natural resources;
Taking into account the problems of both food-importing and food-exporting countries, to ensure an equitable distribution of world food supplies in relation to need.
Article 12
The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

The steps to be taken by the States Parties to the present Covenant to achieve the full realization of this right shall include those necessary for:
The provision for the reduction of the stillbirth-rate and of infant mortality and for the healthy development of the child;
The improvement of all aspects of environmental and industrial hygiene;
The prevention, treatment and control epidemic, endemic, occupational and other diseases;
The creation of conditions which would assure to all medical service and medical attention in the event of sickness.
Article 13
The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to education. They agree that education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. They further agree that education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups, and further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize that, with a view to achieving the full realization of this right:
Primary education shall be compulsory and available free to all;
Secondary education in its different forms, including technical and vocational secondary education, shall be made generally available and accessible to all by ever appropriate means, and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education;
Higher education shall be made equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity, by every appropriate means, and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education;
Fundamental education shall be encouraged or intensified as far as possible for those persons who have not received or completed the whole period of their primary education;
The development of a system of schools at all levels shall be actively pursued, an adequate fellowship system shall be established, and the material conditions of teaching staff shall be continuously improved.
The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to have respect for the liberty of parents and, when applicable, legal guardians to choose for their children schools, other than those established by the public authorities, which conform to such minimum educational standards as may be laid down or approved by the State and to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions.
No part of this article shall be construed so as to interfere with the liberty of individuals and bodies to establish and direct educational institutions, subject always to the observance of the principles set forth in paragraph 1 of this article and to the requirement that the education given in such institutions shall conform to such minimum standards as may be laid down by the State.
Article 14
Each State Party to the present Covenant which, at the time of becoming a Party, has not been able to secure in its metropolitan territory of other territories under its jurisdiction compulsory primary education, free of charge, undertakes, within two years, to work out and adopt a detailed plan of action for the progressive implementation, within a

reasonable number of years, to be fixed in the plan, of the principle of compulsory education free of charge for all.

Article 15
The States Parties to the present covenant recognize the right of everyone:
To take part in cultural life;
To enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications';
To benefit from the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.
The steps to be taken by the States Parties to the present Covenant to achieve the full realization of this right shall include those necessary for the conservation, the development and the diffusion of science and culture.
The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to respect the freedom indispensable for scientific research and creative activity.
The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the benefits to be derived from the encouragement and development of international contacts and co-operation in the scientific and cultural fields.
PART IV – discusses reporting procedures within the UN.

PART V – discusses signatures and when they take effect.

Appendix, Politics – European Convention on Human Rights, 1950-1966

THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND ITS FIVE PROTOCOLS

The European Convention on Human Rights
The Governments signatory hereto, being Members of the Council of Europe,

Considering the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10 December 1948;

Considering that this Declaration aims at securing the universal and effective recognition and observance of the Rights therein declared;

Considering that the aim of the Council of Europe is the achievement of greater unity between its Members and that one of the methods by which the aim is to be pursued is the maintenance and further realization of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms;

Reaffirming their profound belief in those Fundamental Freedoms which are the foundation of justice and peace in the world and are best maintained on the one hand by an effective political democracy and on the other by a common understanding and observance of the Human Rights upon which they depend;

Being resolved, as the Governments of European countries which are like-minded and have a common heritage of political traditions, ideals, freedom and the rule of law to take the first steps for the collective enforcement of certain of the Rights stated in the Universal Declaration;

Have agreed as follows:

ARTICLE 1
The High Contracting Parties shall secure to everyone within their jurisdiction the rights and freedoms defined in Section I of this Convention.

SECTION I
ARTICLE 2
Everyone's right to life shall be protected by law. No one shall be deprived of his life intentionally save in the execution of a sentence of a court following his conviction of a crime for which this penalty is provided by law.
Deprivation of life shall not be regarded as inflicted in contravention of this article when it results from the use of force which is no more than absolutely necessary:
(a) in defence of any person from unlawful violence;
(b) in order to effect a lawful arrest or to prevent escape of a person lawfully detained;
(c) in action lawfully taken for the purpose of quelling a riot or insurrection.
ARTICLE 3
No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

ARTICLE 4
No one shall be held in slavery or servitude.
No one shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labour.
For the purpose of this article the term forced or compulsory labour' shall not include:
(a) any work required to be done in the ordinary course of detention imposed according to the provisions of Article 5 of this Convention or during conditional release from such detention;
(b) any service of a military character or, in case of conscientious objectors in countries where they are recognized, service exacted instead of compulsory military service;
(c) any service exacted in case of an emergency or calamity threatening the life or well-being of the community;
(d) any work or service which forms part of normal civic obligations.
ARTICLE 5
Everyone has the right to liberty and security of person.
No one shall be deprived of his liberty save in the following cases and in accordance with a procedure prescribed by law:

(a) the lawful detention of a person after conviction by a competent court;
(b) the lawful arrest or detention of a person for non-compliance with the lawful order of a court or in order to secure the fulfilment of any obligation prescribed by law;
(c) the lawful arrest or detention of a person effected for the purpose of bringing him before the competent legal authority of reasonable suspicion of having committed and

offence or when it is reasonably considered necessary to prevent his committing an offence or fleeing after having done so;
(d) the detention of a minor by lawful order for the purpose of educational supervision or his lawful detention for the purpose of bringing him before the competent legal authority;
(e) the lawful detention of persons for the prevention of the spreading of infectious diseases, of persons of unsound mind, alcoholics or drug addicts, or vagrants;
(f) the lawful arrest or detention of a person to prevent his effecting an unauthorized entry into the country or of a person against whom action is being taken with a view to deportation or extradition.
Everyone who is arrested shall be informed promptly, in a language which he understands, of the reasons for his arrest and the charge against him.
Everyone arrested or detained in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1(c) of this article shall be brought promptly before a judge or other officer authorized by law to exercise judicial power and shall be entitled to trial within a reasonable time or to release pending trial. Release may be conditioned by guarantees to appear for trial.
Everyone who is deprived of his liberty by arrest or detention shall be entitled to take proceedings by which the lawfulness of his detention shall be decided speedily by a court and his release ordered if the detention is not lawful.
Everyone who has been the victim of arrest or detention in contravention of the provisions of this article shall have an enforceable right to compensation.
ARTICLE 6
In the determination of his civil rights and obligations or of any criminal charge against him, everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal established by law. Judgement shall be pronounced publicly by the press and public may be excluded from all or part of the trial in the interest of morals, public order or national security in a democratic society, where the interests of juveniles or the protection of the private life of the parties so require, or the extent strictly necessary in the opinion of the court in special circumstances where publicity would prejudice the interests of justice.
Everyone charged with a criminal offence shall be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law.
Everyone charged with a criminal offence has the following minimum rights:
(a) to be informed promptly, in a language which he understands and in detail, of the nature and cause of the accusation against him;
(b) to have adequate time and the facilities for the preparation of his defence;
(c) to defend himself in person or through legal assistance of his own choosing or, if he has not sufficient means to pay for legal assistance, to be given it free when the interests of justice so require;
(d) to examine or have examined witnesses against him and to obtain the attendance and examination of witnesses on his behalf under the same conditions as witnesses against him;
(e) to have the free assistance of an interpreter if he cannot understand or speak the language used in court.
ARTICLE 7
No one shall be held guilty of any criminal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a criminal offence under national or international law at the time

when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the criminal offence was committed.
This article shall not prejudice the trial and punishment of any person for any act or omission which, at the time when it was committed, was criminal according the general principles of law recognized by civilized nations.
ARTICLE 8
Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.
There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.
ARTICLE 9
Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance.
Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.
ARTICLE 10
Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. this right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. This article shall not prevent States from requiring the licensing of broadcasting, television or cinema enterprises.
The exercise of these freedoms, since it carries with it duties and responsibilities, may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions or penalties as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or the rights of others, for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary.
ARTICLE 11
Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.
No restrictions shall be placed on the exercise of these rights other than such as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. this article shall not prevent the imposition of lawful restrictions on the exercise of these rights by members of the armed forces, of the police or of the administration of the State.
ARTICLE 12

Men and women of marriageable age have the right to marry and to found a family, according to the national laws governing the exercise of this right.

ARTICLE 13
Everyone whose rights and freedoms as set forth in this Convention are violated shall have an effective remedy before a national authority notwithstanding that the violation has been committed by persons acting in an official capacity.

ARTICLE 14
The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.

ARTICLE 15
In time of war or other public emergency threatening the life of the nation any High Contracting Party may take measures derogating from its obligations under this Convention to the extent strictly required by the exigencies of the situation, provided that such measures are not inconsistent with its other obligations under international law.
No derogation from Article 2, except in respect of deaths resulting from lawful acts of war, or from Articles 3, 4 (paragraph 1) and 7 shall be made under this provision.
Any High Contracting Party availing itself of this right of derogation shall keep the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe fully informed of the measures which it has taken and the reasons therefor. It shall also inform the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe when such measures have ceased to operate and the provisions of the Convention are again being fully executed.
ARTICLE 16
Nothing in Articles 10, 11, and 14 shall be regarded as preventing the High Contracting Parties from imposing restrictions on the political activity of aliens.

ARTICLE 17
Nothing in this Convention may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or perform any act aimed at the destruction on any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein or at their limitation to a greater extent than is provided for in the Convention.

ARTICLE 18
The restrictions permitted under this Convention to the said rights and freedoms shall not be applied for any purpose other than those for which they have been prescribed.

SECTION II
ARTICLE 19
To ensure the observance of the engagements undertaken by the High Contracting Parties in the present Convention, there shall be set up:

A European Commission of Human Rights hereinafter referred to as 'the Commission';
A European Court of Human Rights, hereinafter referred to as 'the Court'.

SECTION III

ARTICLE 20

The Commission shall consist of a number of members equal to that of the High Contracting Parties. No two members of the Commission may be nationals of the same state.

ARTICLE 21

The members of the Commission shall be elected by the Committee of Ministers by an absolute majority of votes, from a list of names drawn up by the Bureau of the Consultative Assembly; each group of the Representatives of the High Contracting Parties in the Consultative Assembly shall put forward three candidates, of whom two at least shall be its nationals.

As far as applicable, the same procedure shall be followed to complete the Commission in the event of other States subsequently becoming Parties to this Convention, and in filing casual vacancies.

ARTICLE 22

The members of the Commission shall be elected for a period of six years. They may be re-elected. However, of the members elected at the first election, the terms of seven members shall expire at the end of three years.

The members whose terms are to expire at the end of the initial period of three years shall be chosen by lot by the Secretary- General of the Council of Europe immediately after the first election has been completed.

A member of the Commission elected to replace a member whose term of office has not expired shall hold office for the remainder of his predecessor's term.

The members of the Commission shall hold office until replaced. After having been replaced, they shall continue to deal with such cases as they already have under consideration.

ARTICLE 23

The members of the Commission shall sit on the Commission in their individual capacity.

ARTICLE 24

Any High Contracting Party may refer to the Commission, through the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, any alleged breach of the provisions of the Convention by another High Contracting Party.

ARTICLE 25

The Commission may receive petitions addressed to the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe from any person, non- governmental organization or group of individuals claiming to the victim of a violation by one of the High Contracting Parties of the rights set forth in this Convention, provided that the High Contracting Party against which the complaint has been lodged has declared that it recognizes the competence of the Commission to receive such petitions. Those of the High Contracting Parties who t)ve made such a declaration undertake not to hinder in any way the effective exercise of this right.

Such declarations may be made for a specific period.
The declarations shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe who shall transmit copies thereof to the High Contracting Parties and publish them.
The Commission shall only exercise the powers provided for in this article when at least six High Contracting Parties are bound by declarations made in accordance with the preceding paragraphs.
ARTICLE 26
The Commission may only deal with the matter after all domestic remedies have been exhausted, according to the generally recognized rules of international law, and within a period of six months from the date on which the final decision was taken.

ARTICLE 27
the Commission shall not deal with any petition submitted under Article 25 which
(a) is anonymous, or
(b) is substantially the same as a matter which has already been examined by the Commission or has already been submitted to another procedure or international investigation or settlement and if it contains no relevant new information.
The Commission shall consider inadmissible any petition submitted under Article 25 which it considers incompatible with the provisions of the present Convention, manifestly ill-founded, or an abuse of the right of petition.
The Commission shall reject any petition referred to it which it considers inadmissible under Article 26.
ARTICLE 28
In the event of the Commission accepting a petition referred to it:

(a) it shall, with a view to ascertaining the facts undertake together with the representatives of the parties and examination of the petition and, if need be, an investigation, for the effective conduct of which the States concerned shall furnish all necessary facilities, after an exchange of views with the Commission;
(b) it shall place itself at the disposal of the parties concerned with a view to securing a friendly settlement of the matter on the basis of respect for Human Rights as defined in this Convention.
ARTICLE 29
The Commission shall perform the functions set out in Article 28 by means of a Sub-Commission consisting of seven members of the Commission.
Each of the parties concerned may appoint as members of this Sub-Commission a person of its choice.
The remaining members shall be chosen by lot in accordance with arrangements prescribed in the Rules of Procedure of the Commission.
ARTICLE 30
If the Sub-Commission succeeds in effecting a friendly settlement in accordance with Article 28, it shall draw up a Report which shall be sent to the States concerned, to the Committee of Ministers and to the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe for publication. This Report shall be confined to a brief statement of the facts and of the solution reached.
ARTICLE 31

If a solution is not reached, the Commission shall draw up a Report on the facts and state its opinion as to whether the facts found disclose a breach by the State concerned of its obligations under the Convention. The opinions of all the members of the Commission on this point may be stated in the Report.
The Report shall be transmitted to the Committee of Ministers. It shall also be transmitted to the States concerned, who shall not be at liberty to publish it.
In transmitting the Report to the Committee of Ministers the Commission may make such proposals as it thinks fit.
ARTICLE 32
If the question is not referred to the Court in accordance with Article 48 of this Convention within a period of three months from the date of the transmission of the Report to the Committee of Ministers, the Committee of Ministers shall decide by a majority of two-thirds of the members entitled to sit on the Committee whether there has been a violation of the Convention.
In the affirmative case the Committee of Ministers shall prescribe a period during which the Contracting Party concerned must take the measures required by the decision of the Committee of Ministers.
If the High Contracting Party concerned has not taken satisfactory measures within the prescribed period, the Committee of Ministers shall decide by the majority provided for in paragraph 1 above what effect shall be given to its original decision and shall publish the Report.
The High Contracting Parties undertake to regard as binding on them any decision which the Committee of Ministers may take in application of the preceding paragraphs.
ARTICLE 33
The Commission shall meet 'in camera'.

ARTICLE 34
The Commission shall take its decision by a majority of the Members present and voting; the Sub-Commission shall take its decisions by a majority of its members.

ARTICLE 35
The Commission shall meet as the circumstances require. The meetings shall be convened by the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe.

ARTICLE 36
The Commission shall draw up its own rules of procedure.

ARTICLE 37
The secretariat of The Commission shall be provided by the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe.

SECTION IV
ARTICLE 38
The European Court of Human Rights shall consist of a number of judges equal to that of the Members of the Council of Europe. No two judges may be nationals of the State.

ARTICLE 39
The members of the Court shall be elected by the Consultative Assembly by a majority of the votes cast from a list of persons nominated by Members of the Council of Europe; each Member shall nominate three candidates, of whom two at least shall be its nationals.
As far as applicable, the same procedure shall be followed to complete the Court in the event of the admission of new members of the Council of Europe, and in filling casual vacancies.
The candidates shall be of high moral character and must either possess the qualifications required for appointment to high judicial office or be jurisconsults of recognized competence.
ARTICLE 40
The members of the Court shall be elected for a period of nine years. They may be re-elected. However, of the members elected at the first election the terms of four members shall expire at the end of three years, and the terms of four more members shall expire at the end of six years.
The members whose terms are to expire at the end of the initial periods of three and six years shall be chosen by lot by the Secretary-General immediately after the first election has been completed.
A member of the Court elected to replace a member whose term of office has not expired shall hold office for the remainder of his predecessor's term.
The members of the Court shall hold office until replaced. After having been replaced, they shall continue to deal with such cases as they already have under consideration.
ARTICLE 41
The Court shall elect the President and Vice-President for a period of three years. They may be re-elected.

ARTICLE 42
The members of the Court shall receive for each day of duty a compensation to be determined by the Committee of Ministers.

ARTICLE 43
For the consideration of each case brought before it the Court shall consist of a Chamber composed of seven judges. There shall sit as an 'ex officio' member of the Chamber the judge who is a national of any State party concerned, or, if there is none, a person of its choice who shall sit in the capacity of judge; the names of the other judges shall be chosen by lot by the President before the opening of the case.

ARTICLE 44
Only the High Contracting Parties and the Commission shall have the right to bring a case before the Court.

ARTICLE 45
The jurisdiction of the Court shall extend to all cases concerning the interpretation and application of the present Convention which the High Contracting Parties or the Commission shall refer to it in accordance with Article 48.

ARTICLE 46
Any of the High Contracting Parties may at any time declare that it recognizes as compulsory 'ipso facto' and without special agreement the jurisdiction of the Court in all matters concerning the interpretation and application of the present Convention.
The declarations referred to above may be made unconditionally or on condition of reciprocity on the part of several or certain other High Contracting Parties or for a specified period.
These declarations shall be deposited with the Secretary- General of the Council of Europe who shall transmit copies thereof to the High Contracting Parties.
ARTICLE 47
The Court may only deal with a case after the Commission has acknowledged the failure of efforts for a friendly settlement and within the period of three months provided for in Article 32.

ARTICLE 48
The following may bring a case before the Court, provided that the High Contracting Party concerned, if there is only one, or the High Contracting Parties concerned, if there is more than one, are subject to the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court, or failing that, with the consent of the High Contracting Party concerned, if there is only one, or of the High Contracting Parties concerned if there is more than one:

(a) the Commission;
(b) a High Contracting Party whose national is alleged to be a victim;
(c) a High Contracting Party which referred the case to the Commission;
(d) a High Contracting Party against which the complaint has been lodged.
ARTICLE 49
In the event of dispute as to whither the Court has the jurisdiction, the matter shall be settled by the decision of the Court.

ARTICLE 50
If the Court finds that a decision or a measure taken by a legal authority or any other authority of a High Contracting Party, is completely or partially in conflict with the obligations arising from the present convention, and if the internal law of the said Party allows only partial reparation to be made for the consequences of this decision or measure, the decision of the Court shall, if necessary, afford just satisfaction to the injured party.

ARTICLE 51
Reasons shall be given for the judgement of the Court.
If the judgement does not represent in whole or in part the unanimous opinion of the judges, any judges shall be entitled to deliver a separate opinion.
ARTICLE 52
The judgement of the Court shall be final.

ARTICLE 53

The High Contracting Parties undertake to abide by the decision of the Court in any case to which they are parties.

ARTICLE 54
The judgement of the Court shall be transmitted to the Committee of Ministers which shall supervise its execution.

ARTICLE 55
The Court shall draw up its own rules and shall determine its own procedure.

ARTICLE 56
The first election of the members of the Court shall take place after the declarations by the High Contracting Parties mentioned in Article 46 have reached a total of eight.
No case can be brought before the Court before this election.
SECTION V
ARTICLE 57
On receipt of a request from the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe any High Contracting Party shall furnish an explanation of the manner in which its internal law ensures the effective implementation of any of the provisions of this Convention.

ARTICLE 58
The expenses of the Commission and the Court shall be borne by the Council of Europe.

ARTICLE 59
The members of the Commission and of the Court shall be entitled, during the discharge of their functions, to the privileges and immunities provided for in Article 40 of the Statute of the Council of Europe and in the agreements made thereunder.

ARTICLE 60
Nothing in this Convention shall be construed as limiting or derogating from any of the human rights and fundamental freedoms which may be ensured under the laws of any High Contracting Party or under any other agreement to which it is a Party.

ARTICLE 61
Nothing in this Convention shall prejudice the powers conferred on the Committee of Ministers by the Statute of the Council of Europe.

ARTICLE 62
The High Contracting Parties agree that, except by special agreement, they will not avail themselves of treaties, conventions or declarations in force between them for the purpose of submitting, by way of petition, a dispute arising out of the interpretation or application of this Convention to a means of settlement other than those provided for in this Convention.

ARTICLE 63

Any State may at the time of its ratification or at any time thereafter declare by notification addressed to the Secretary- General of the Council of Europe that the present Convention shall extend to all or any of the territories for whose international relations it is responsible.
The Convention shall extend to the territory or territories named in the notification as from the thirtieth day after the receipt of this notification by the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe.
The provisions of this Convention shall be applied in such territories with due regard, however, to local requirements.
Any State which has made a declaration in accordance with paragraph 1 of this article may at any time thereafter declare on behalf of one or more of the territories to which the declaration relates that it accepts the competence of the Commission to receive petitions from individuals, non-governmental organizations or groups of individuals in accordance with Article 25 of the present Convention.
ARTICLE 64
Any State may, when signing this Convention or when depositing its instrument of ratification, make a reservation in respect of any particular provision of the Convention to the extent that any law then in force in its territory is not in conformity with the provision. Reservations of a general character shall not be permitted under this article. Any reservation made under this article shall contain a brief statement of the law concerned.
ARTICLE 65
A High Contracting Party may denounce the present Convention only after the expiry of five years from the date of which it became a Party to it and after six months' notice contained in a notification addressed to the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, who shall inform the other High Contracting Parties.
Such a denunciation shall not have the effect of releasing the High Contracting Party concerned from its obligations under this Convention in respect of any act which, being capable of constituting a violation of such obligations, may have been performed by it before the date at which the denunciation became effective.
Any High Contracting Party which shall cease to be a Member of the Council of Europe shall cease to be a Party to this Convention under the same conditions.
The Convention may be denounced in accordance with the provisions of the preceding paragraphs in respect of any territory to which it has been declared to extend under the terms Article 63.
ARTICLE 66
This Convention shall be open to the signature of the Members of the Council of Europe. It shall be ratified. Ratifications shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe.
The present Convention shall come into force after the deposit of ten instruments of ratification.
As regards any signatory ratifying subsequently, the Convention shall come into force at the date of the deposit of itsP!nstrument of ratification.
The Secretary-General of the Council of Europe shall notify all the Members of the Council of Europe of the entry into force of the Convention, the names of the High

Contracting Parties who have ratified it, and the deposit of all instruments of ratification which may be effected subsequently.
Done at Rome this 4th day of November, 1950, in English and French, both text being equally authentic, in a single copy which shall remain deposited in the archives of the Council of Europe. The Secretary-General shall transmit certified copies to each of the signatories.

Protocols
1. Enforcement of certain Rights and Freedoms not included in Section I of the Convention
The Governments signatory hereto, being Members of the Council of Europe,

Being resolved to take steps to ensure the collective enforcement of certain rights and freedoms other than those already included in Section I of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms signed at Rome on 4th November, 1950 (hereinafter referred to as 'the Convention'),

Have agreed as follows:

ARTICLE 1
Every natural or legal person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his possessions. No one shall be deprived of his possessions except in the public interest and subject to the conditions provided for by law and by the general principles of international law.

The preceding provisions shall not, however, in any way impair the right of a State to enforce such laws as it deems necessary to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest or to secure the payment of taxes or other contributions or penalties.

ARTICLE 2
No person shall be denied the right to education. In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religions and philosophical convictions.

ARTICLE 3
The High Contracting Parties undertake to hold free elections at reasonable intervals by secret ballot, under conditions which will ensure the free expression of the opinion of the people in the choice of the legislature.

ARTICLE 4
Any High Contracting Party may at the time of signature or ratification or at any time thereafter communicate to the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe a declaration stating the extent to which it undertakes that the provisions of the present Protocol shall

apply to such of the territories for the international relations of which it is responsible as are named therein.

Any High Contracting Party which has communicated a declaration in virtue of the preceding paragraph may from time to time communicate a further declaration modifying the terms of any former declaration or terminating the application of the provisions of this Protocol in respect of any territory.

A declaration made in accordance with this article shall be deemed to have been made in accordance with paragraph 1 of Article 63 of the Convention.

ARTICLE 5
As between the High Contracting Parties the provisions of Articles 1, 2, 3 and 4 of this Protocol shall be regarded as additional articles to the convention and all the provisions of the Convention shall apply accordingly.

ARTICLE 6
This Protocol shall be open for signature by the Members of the Council of Europe, who are the signatories of the Convention; it shall be ratified at the same time as or after the ratification of the Convention. It shall enter into force after the deposit of ten instruments of ratification. As regards any signatory ratifying subsequently, the Protocol shall enter into force at the date of the deposit of its instrument of ratification.

The instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, who will notify all the Members of the names of those who have ratified.

Done at Paris on the 20th day of March 1952, In English and French, both text being equally authentic, in a single copy which shall remain deposited in the archives of the Council of Europe. The Secretary-General shall transmit certified copies to each of the signatory Governments

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2. Conferring upon the European Court of Human Rights Competence to give Advisory Opinions
The Member States of the Council of Europe signatory hereto:

Having regard to the provisions of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms signed at Rome on 4 November 1950 (hereinafter referred to as 'the Convention'), and in particular Article 19 instituting, among other bodies, a European Court of Human Rights (hereinafter referred to as 'the Court');

Considering that it is expedient to confer upon the Court competence to give advisory opinions subject to certain conditions;

Have agreed as follows:

ARTICLE 1
The Court may, at the request of the Committee of Ministers, give advisory opinions on legal questions concerning the interpretation of the Convention and the Protocols thereto. Such opinions shall not deal with any question relating to the content or scope of the rights or freedoms defined in Section I of the convention and in the Protocols thereto, or with any other question which the Commission, the Court, or the committee of Ministers might have to consider in consequence of any such proceedings as could be instituted in accordance with the Convention.
Decisions of the Committee of Ministers to request an advisory opinion of the Court shall require a two-thirds majority vote of the representatives entitled to sit on the Committee.
ARTICLE 2
The Court shall decide whether a request for an advisory opinion submitted by the Committee of Ministers is within its consultative competence as defined in Article 1 of this Protocol.

ARTICLE 3
For the consideration of requests for an advisory opinion, the Court shall sit in plenary session.
Reasons shall be given for advisory opinions of the Court.
If the advisory opinion does not represent in whole or in part the unanimous opinion of the judges, any judge shall be entitled to deliver a separate opinion.
Advisory opinions of the Court shall be communicated to the Committee of Ministers.
ARTICLE 4
The powers of the Court under Article 55 of the Convention shall extend to the drawing up of such rules and the determination of such procedure as the Court may think necessary for the purposes of this Protocol.

ARTICLE 5
This Protocol shall be open to signature by member States of the Council of Europe, signatories to the Convention, who may become Parties to it by:
(a) signature without reservation in respect of ratification or acceptance;
(b) signature with reservation in respect of ratification or acceptance, followed by ratification or acceptance. Instruments of ratification or acceptance shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe.
This Protocol shall enter into force as soon as all the States Parties to the Convention shall have become Parties to the Protocol in accordance with the Provisions of paragraph 1 of this article.
From the date of the entry into force of this Protocol, Articles 1 to 4 shall be considered an integral part of the Convention.
The Secretary-General of the Council of Europe shall notify the Member States of the Council of:
(a) any signature without reservation in respect of ratification or acceptance;
(b) any signature with reservation in respect of ratification or acceptance;

(c) the deposit of any instrument of ratification or acceptance;
(d) the date of entry into force of this Protocol in accordance with paragraph 2 of this article.
In witness whereof the undersigned, being duly authorized thereto, have signed this Protocol.

Done at Strasbourg, this 6th day of May 1963, in English and French, both text being equally authentic, in a single copy which shall remain deposited in the archives of the Council of Europe. The Secretary-General shall transmit certified copies to each of the signatory States.

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3. Amending Articles 29, 30, and 94 of the Convention
The member States of the Council, signatories to this Protocol,

Considering that it is advisable to amend certain provisions of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms signed at rome on 4 November 1950 (hereinafter referred to as 'the Convention') concerning the procedure of the European Commission of Human Rights,

Have agreed as follows:

ARTICLE 1
Article 29 of the Convention is deleted.
The following provision shall be inserted in the Convention:
"ARTICLE 29

After it has accepted a petition submitted under Article 25, the Commission may nevertheless decide unanimously to reject the petition if, in the course of its examination, it finds that the existence of one of the grounds for non-acceptance provided for in Article 27 has been established.

In such a case, the decision shall be communicated to the parties."

ARTICLE 2
At the beginning of Article 34 of the Convention, the following shall be inserted:
"Subject to the provisions of Article 29..."
At the end of the same article, the sentence "the Sub- commission shall take its decisions by a majority of its members" shall be deleted.
ARTICLE 4
The Protocol shall be open to signature by the member States of the Council of Europe, who may become Parties to it either by:
(a) signature without reservation in respect of ratification or acceptance, or

(b) signature with reservation in respect of ratification or acceptance, followed by ratification or acceptance. Instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe.
This Protocol shall enter force as soon as all States Parties to the Convention shall have become Parties to the Protocol, in accordance with paragraph 1 of this article.
The Secretary-General of the Council of Europe shall notify the Member States of the Council of:
(a) any signature without reservation in respect of ratification or acceptance;
(b) any signature with reservation in respect of ratification or acceptance;
(c) the deposit of any instrument of ratification or acceptance;
(d) the date of entry into force of this Protocol in accordance with paragraph 2 of this article.
In witness whereof the undersigned, being duly authorized thereto, have signed this Protocol.

Done at Strasbourg, this 6th day of May 1963, in English and French, both text being equally authentic, in a single copy which shall remain deposited in the archives of the Council of Europe. The Secretary-General shall transmit certified copies to each of the signatory States

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4. Protecting certain Additional Rights
The Governments signatory hereto, being Members of the Council of Europe,

Being resolved to take steps to ensure the collective enforcement of certain rights and freedoms other than those already included in Section 1 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms signed at Rome on 4 November 1950 (hereinafter referred to as 'the Convention') and in Articles 1 to 3 of the First Protocol to the Convention, signed at Paris on 20 March 1952,

Have agreed as follows:

ARTICLE 1
No one shall be deprived of his liberty merely on the ground of inability to fulfil a contractual obligation.

ARTICLE 2
Everyone lawfully within the territory of a State shall, within that territory, have the right to liberty of movement and freedom to choose his residence.
Everyone shall be free to leave any country, including his own.
No restrictions shall be placed on the exercise of these rights other than such as are in accordance with law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety for the maintenance of 'ordre public', for the prevention of crime, for the protection of rights and freedoms of others.

The rights set forth in paragraph 1 may also be subject, in particular areas, to restrictions imposes in accordance with law and justified by the public interest in a democratic society.

ARTICLE 3

No one shall be expelled, by means either of an individual or of a collective measure, from the territory of the State of which he is a national.

No one shall be deprived of the right to enter the territory of the State of which he is a national.

ARTICLE 4

Collective expulsion of aliens is prohibited.

ARTICLE 5

Any High Contracting Party may, at the time of signature or ratification of this Protocol, or at any time thereafter, communicate to the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe a declaration stating the extent to which it undertakes that the provisions of this Protocol shall apply to such of the territories for the international relations of which it is responsible as are named therein.

Any High Contracting Party which has communicated a declaration in virtue of the preceding paragraph may, from time to time, communicate a further declaration modifying the terms of any former declaration or terminating the application of the provisions of this Protocol in respect of territory.

A declaration made in accordance with this article shall be deemed to have been made in accordance with paragraph 1 of Article 63 of the Convention.

The territory of any State to which this Protocol applies by virtue of the ratification or acceptance by that State, and each territory to which this Protocol is applied by virtue of a declaration by that State under this article, shall be treated as separate territories for the purpose of the references in Articles 2 and 3 to the territory of a State.

ARTICLE 6

As between the High Contracting Parties the provisions of Articles 1 to 5 of this Protocol shall be regarded as additional articles to the convention, and all the provisions of the Convention shall apply accordingly.

Nevertheless, the right of individual recourse recognized by a declaration made under Article 25 of the convention, or the acceptance of the compulsory jurisdiction of the court by a declaration made under Article 46 of the convention, shall not be effective in relation to this Protocol unless the High Contracting Party concerned has made a statement recognizing such a right, or accepting such jurisdiction, in respect of all or any of Articles 1 to 4 of the Protocol.

ARTICLE 7

This Protocol shall be open for signature by the members of the Council of Europe who are the signatories of the Convention; it shall be ratified at the same time as or after the ratification of the Convention. It shall enter into force after the deposit of five instruments of ratification. As regards any signatory ratifying subsequently, the Protocol shall enter into force at the date of the deposit of its instrument of ratification.

The instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, who will notify all members of the names of those who have ratified.

In witness thereof, the undersigned, being duly authorized thereto, have signed this Protocol.

Done at Strasbourg, this 16th day of September 1963, in English and French, both texts being equally authentic, in a single copy which shall remain deposited in the archives of the Council of Europe. The Secretary-General shall transmit certified copies to each of the signatory States.

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5. Amending Articles 22 and 40 of the Convention
The Governments signatory hereto, being Members of the Council of Europe,

Considering that certain inconveniences have arisen in the application of the provisions of Articles 22 and 40 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and fundamental Freedoms signed at Rome of 4th November 1950 (hereinafter referred to as 'the Convention') relating to the length of the terms of office of the members of the European Commission of Human Rights (hereinafter referred to as 'the Commission') and of the European Court of Human Rights (hereinafter referred to as 'the Court');

Considering that it is desirable to ensure as far as possible an election every three years of one half of the members of the Commission and of one third of the members of the Court;

Considering therefore that it is desirable to amend certain provisions of the Convention,

Have agreed as follows:

ARTICLE 1
In Article 22 of the Convention, the following two paragraphs shall be inserted after paragraph (2):

"(3) In order to ensure that, as far as possible, one half of the membership of the Commission shall be renewed every three years, the Committee of Ministers may decide, before proceeding to any subsequent election, that the term or terms of office of one or more members to be elected shall be for a period other than six years but not more than nine and not less than three years.

(4) In cases where more than one term of office is involved and the Committee of Ministers applies the preceding paragraph, the allocation of the terms of office shall be effected by the drawing of lots by the Secretary-General, immediately after the election."

ARTICLE 2
In Article 22 of the Convention, the former paragraphs (3) and (4) shall become respectively paragraphs (5) and (6).

ARTICLE 3
In Article 40 of the Convention, the following two paragraphs shall be inserted after paragraph (2):

"(3) In order to ensure that, as far as possible, one half of the membership of the Court shall be renewed every three years, the Consultative Assembly may decide, before proceeding to any subsequent election, that the term or terms of office of one or more members to be elected shall be for a period other than nine years but not more than twelve and not less than six years.

(4) In cases where more than one term of office is involved and the Consultative Assembly applies the preceding paragraph, the allocation of the terms of office shall be effected by the drawing of lots by the Secretary-General, immediately after the election."

ARTICLE 4
In Article 40 of the Convention, the former paragraphs (3) and (4) shall become respectively paragraphs (5) and (6).

ARTICLE 5
This Protocol shall be open to signature by Members of the Council of Europe, signatories to the Convention, who may become Parties to it by;
(a) signature without reservation in respect of ratification or acceptance;
(b) signature with reservation in respect of ratification or acceptance, followed by ratification or acceptance.
Instruments of ratification or acceptance shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe.

This Protocol shall enter into force as soon as all Contracting Parties to the Convention shall have become Parties to the Protocol, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1 of this article.
The Secretary-General of the Council of Europe shall notify the Members of the Council of:
(a) any signature without reservation in respect of ratification or acceptance;
(b) any signature with reservation in respect of ratification or acceptance;
(c) the deposit of any instrument of ratification or acceptance;
(d) the date of entry into force of this Protocol in accordance with paragraph 2 of this article.