

# L I B E R T Y



6

School for Martyrs

8

Call to Compassion

11

The Christian View  
of Human Life

14

Bulgaria

19

They Took Our School

23

The Sunday Absurdity

30

Better Off Dead

**THE CASE OF THE OVERLOOKED LAW**

25

# LIBERTY

**Robert L. Dale**  
Chairman, Editorial Board

**Roland R. Hegstad**  
Editor

**Clifford Goldstein**  
Associate Editor

**Loleta Thomas Bailey**  
Managing Editor

**James A. Cavil**  
Copy Editor

**Leo Ranzolin**  
**Robert S. Folkenberg**  
**A.C. McClure**  
Consulting Editors

**Vernon Alger**  
**Karnik Doukmetzian**  
**Richard Fenn**  
**Darrel Huenergardt**  
**Ted Jones**  
**Clayton Pritchett**  
**John Stevens**  
**Lewis Stout**  
**Adrian Westney, Sr.**  
Consultants

**Gary M. Ross**  
U.S. Congress Liaison

**Mitchell A. Tyner**  
Legal Advisor

**Harry Knox**  
Designer

**George Crumley**  
Treasurer

*Liberty* is a publication of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Published and copyrighted © 1993 by the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-8600. Address corrections only: *Liberty*, 55 West Oak Ridge Drive, Hagerstown, Maryland 21740. PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

Printed bimonthly by the Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 55 West Oak Ridge Drive, Hagerstown, MD 21740. Subscription price: US \$6.95 per year. Single copy: US \$1.50. Price may vary where national currencies differ. Vol. 88, No. 1, January/February, 1993. Postmaster: Address correction requested.

## From The Editor

### A Vote for the Unborn

A reader (see this page) chides *Liberty* for pointing its finger at Senator Jesse Helms, an adamant prolifer, but also an adamant supporter of the tobacco industry. Tobacco products when used by pregnant women cause fetal deaths, decreased lung capacity in the newborn, and have a host of other life-depriving consequences. Helms, the reader says, "should not support the tobacco industry at the expense of the unborn." But he adds: "Your church which (unlike Helms) opposes smoking, permits the murder of the unborn in its own hospitals."

The reader's punchline: "Unfortunately, your church is also my church."

The Seventh-day Adventist Church operates 475 hospitals and clinics worldwide. Fifty are in the United States and Canada. In 1971 the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists developed abortion guidelines for its hospitals that prohibited abortions of convenience. But until October 1992, the church had not published its guidelines nor the theological premises on which they are based.

I'll not repeat here what you can read in the following pages. I shall express my pride in guidelines that combine respect for prenatal human life with regard for the mother. The church does not

attempt in these guidelines to serve as a conscience for its members. Having recognized that women may face "exceptional circumstances that present serious moral or medical dilemmas," it advises the pregnant woman to seek "accurate information, biblical principles, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit." Then, says the church, the woman, not the church, must make the final decision whether to terminate the pregnancy.

If her decision is to abort, the church must minister compassion; if her decision is to carry the fetus to term, the church's role may be even greater—I admire William Willimon's example of what it really means to be Christ's agent to someone in crisis (see Richard Fredericks' "Call to Compassion," page 8).

The guidelines admit that (as in society) "honest differences on the question of abortion exist among Seventh-day Adventists." This judgment was confirmed by the discussion preceding passage of the document (see "The Christian View of Human Life—Adventists Approve Guidelines Rather Than Edicts," page 11). I too asked questions and offered alternative wording. For example, I would have preferred that "severe congenital defects" (however carefully diagnosed in the fetus) not be specified in the "Seventh-day Adventist Guidelines on Abortion" (see

page 12). I fear the results should similar reasoning be applied not to defects in the fetus but in the aged—to those suffering from Alzheimer's, for example.

I voiced these fears. When they were not shared by the majority, I voted for the document as a whole. I hope that the letter-writer whose church is my church will no longer believe it necessary to label his church's position "hypocritical."—R.R.H.

## From Our Readers

### "The Unlikeliest Unlikeliness"

Ah, yes, another attack by *Liberty* on the Honorable Senator Jesse Helms (July-August). You are right that Helms should not support the tobacco industry at the expense of the unborn. But the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the "unlikeliest" source of this "unlikeliness." Your church, which (unlike Helms) opposes smoking, permits the murder of the unborn in its own hospitals (also contrary to Helms' position).

Unfortunately, your church is also my church. But if I had to choose, I would take Helms' hypocritical position over the hypocritical position of my church. BRUCE N. CAMERON, Attorney Montclair, Virginia

[See page 12 for the Adventist Church's guidelines on abortion.—Ed.]

### "The Name We Dare To Mention"

I found Clifford Goldstein's attempt at satire (September-October) to be tragically misdirected and intellectually stilted. In his zeal to deliver American citizens from the hypocrisy of a particular brand of religious belief, Mr. Goldstein would require government to deny the existence of God. In extolling the virtues of *Lee v. Wiseman*, Goldstein does nothing more than trade one form of hypocrisy for a less intellectually defensible one.

To deny the existence of God is the height of intellectual disingenuity. Even most atheists accept the law of cause and effect. Application of the law leads to the inescapable conclusion that everything must have begun with a causer. That atheists live in intellectual hypocrisy because they refuse to recognize the existence of a causer is certainly their constitutional right, but theirs alone. The First Amendment doesn't grant atheists (or anyone else) the power to impose intellectual bankruptcy upon the rest of us, particularly at graduation ceremonies, ostensibly a time to celebrate intellectual achievement.

What is the republican form of government if not democracy in action? If a republican form of government is best in a Churchillian sense, it is so because the tyranny of the majority is

deemed preferable to the tyranny of the few, or the one.

Many thinking citizens do question the imposition of the will of the minority upon the majority—establishment of atheism. To recognize that the U.S. is a nation under God is nothing more than an expression of the intellectual truth of cause and effect; it doesn't establish a particular brand of religion or deny any individual the right to freely exercise his religious beliefs, whether considered minority or majority.

Mr. Goldstein would do well to acknowledge the casual relationship between moral goodness and enlightened democracy.

SCOTT R. BAKER  
Dallas, Texas

[Scott Baker misses the point. *Lee v. Wiseman* does not require "the government to deny the existence of God." Instead, it simply recognizes no governmental right to subject our citizens to religious forms or ceremonies, even as benign as a nondenominational prayer at a graduation ceremony.

Some believe that the First Amendment was to protect religion from the government; others that it was to protect government from religion. Actually, both are correct. *Lee v. Wiseman*, by keeping religion out of the auspices of Uncle Sam (not

letting him write prayers) keeps Uncle Sam out of the auspices of religion (not forcing people to listen to his prayers).

"If a republican form of government is best in a Churchillian sense," Baker writes, "it is so because the tyranny of the majority is deemed preferable to the tyranny of the few, or the one."

Who says? If you happen to be part of the majority, yes. But if you are in the minority, a boot in the face is a boot in the face, whether ordered by the few or the majority. The First Amendment, so aptly applied in *Lee v. Wiseman*, protects minorities from any type of religious tyranny, oligarchic or majoritarian.

"Many thinking citizens," writes Baker, "do question the imposition of the will of the minority upon the majority—the establishment of atheism."

*Wiseman* had nothing to do with the establishment of atheism. Baker seems to take Christ's words to individuals, "If you are not with me, you are against me," and apply them to civil institutions. If the government is not "with" religion then, by his reasoning, it must be against it. Was James Madison promoting atheism in his *Memorial and Remonstrance*, when he railed against a general tax for all denominations? Or Thomas Jefferson when he refused to recommend national days of fasting and prayer?

What *Lee v. Wiseman* said was that we don't need the government to lead us in corporate worship. That's what ministers and churches are for, which is one reason why we have separation of church and state: so that ministers can lead their flock without government interference.

"Mr. Goldstein," Baker continues, "would do well to acknowledge the casual relationship between moral goodness and enlightened democracy." Again, besides the point. What does pressuring people into listening to some generic prayers stamped with government approval have to do with the casual relationship between moral goodness and enlightened democracy? Are those prayers going to make people moral?

Far from demeaning faith or belief in God, my satire was to show that once we allow government any prerogative to establish worship, our religious freedoms can become relics.—C.G.]

I just wanted to tell you how much I appreciated the articles by Don Clark and Clifford Goldstein.

It is my deep conviction that if individuals would conscientiously read these two articles they would grasp the dangers in going to either side of the pendulum as we seek to preserve our religious freedoms today.

When I was in law school 25 years ago, one of my fellow students in the class discussion of the school prayer constitutional cases, blurted out, "Of all the Mickey Mouse issues!" The matter of prayer in public schools is not a "Mickey Mouse" issue. Neither is it easy to balance out the issues of free expression and coercion. I am thankful to those members on the Supreme Court who are still sensitive to these issues affecting our basic human rights.

G. TOM CARTER, Attorney  
Silver Spring, Maryland

### Shooting Gallery

[The following readers responded to the editor's comments on gun control, page 4, September-October issue.]

The television news coverage of southern Florida in the aftermath of hurricane Andrew reported that numerous people were standing guard over the remains of their property armed with whatever firearms they had available. One reporter quoted a chief of police as saying that he had taken an automatic rifle home with him to guard his house. The National Guard troops were clearly visible, but they could not be everywhere at one time. The looting was being televised while the troops were in the streets.

The vast majority of the people who cannot legally obtain a firearm get them

without waiting, without any trouble, and have utter contempt for the gun control laws. Think about it!

JOHN D. BROPHY  
Sacramento, California

Perhaps Roland Hegstad doesn't equate the Second Amendment with the First, but I do. In the event that this subscription is not cancelled, all new issues will immediately be consigned to the trash can without being read.

D. J. BROWN, D.D.S.  
Payette, Idaho

If Roland Hegstad does not find licensing and waiting periods to violate the rights of the Second Amendment, would he then agree that a license to preach or a waiting period to join a church would not violate the rights protected by the First?

*Liberty's* field is religious freedom, but it should not forget that the Bill of Rights is the legal foundation of that freedom and that an attack on one right weakens the others.

Hegstad implies with his England example that such measures would reduce the murder rate and, by extension, the crime rate. That is a quite debatable point (i.e., Washington, D.C. and New York), but this is not the place for that debate, so I ask, is a right to be lost because it is capable of abuse?

Hegstad also cites "sports rifles" versus a Guard Brigade. Perhaps the Second Amendment was meant to protect the people's right to have an M16-A2, the soldier's personal weapon of today. The alternative is to adopt ex-Chief Justice Warren Berger's *Parade* magazine article

argument that the amendment protects only "sporting" arms. Then, by extension, freedom of the press protects the sports pages, not the editorial page?

THOMAS F. BABB, Attorney  
Laurens, South Carolina

Gun control is a bankrupt concept with a proven record of increasing violent crime. Advocates of gun control are known to create flawed "studies" in support of their position. Not one gun law has ever reduced violent crime, or even slowed its rate of growth, in any city, state, or nation.

England now has twice as many homicides with firearms as it did before adopting its repressive procrime gun laws!

Our nation's Founding Father Elbridge Gerry pointed out that gun control is used "whenever governments mean to invade the rights and liberties of the people" (First Congress, first session, August 17, 1789). James Madison, author of the Bill of Rights, referred to private arms as "a barrier against the enterprises of despotic ambition" (*Federalist Paper*, 46).

TIMOTHY FARRAR  
Gainesville, Georgia

You compare the homicide rate in England as opposed to the United States, but that is only a correlation and without any empirical data that gun ownership and the homicide rate are related. You will most likely find that the homicide rate quoted is not just for

### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The God-given right of religious liberty is best exercised when church and state are separate.

Government is God's agency to protect individual rights and to conduct civil affairs; in exercising these responsibilities, officials are entitled to respect and cooperation.

Religious liberty entails freedom of conscience: to worship or not to worship; to profess, practice and promulgate religious beliefs or to change them. In exercising these rights, however, one must respect the equivalent rights of all others.

Attempts to unite church and state are opposed to the interests of each, subversive of human rights and potentially persecuting in character; to oppose union, lawfully and honorably, is not only the citizen's duty but the essence of the Golden rule—to treat others as one wishes to be treated.

 **Pontius' Puddle**

firearm-related deaths.

There is probably a strong correlation between the homicide rate and the amount of drug use, violence on television, poverty, and other factors. There is little doubt that crime is a large issue in the United States today, but there is also little doubt that were it not for gun owners, burglars, robbers, and rapists would be even more brazen in their crimes.

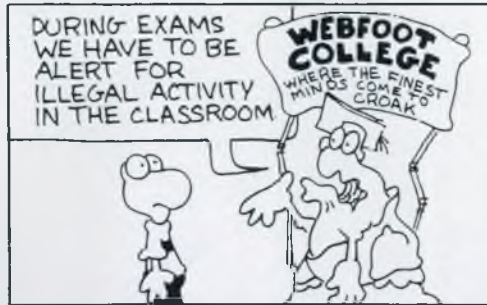
Perhaps your condescending comment about musket-to-musket warfare would have been amended if you had been in the market to buy a gun during the Los Angeles riots and been confronted with a waiting period.

Does your stand on lawful gun ownership extend to the elimination of hunting? Skeet shooting? Fishing?  
LINDY D. JONES, Attorney  
Dallas, Texas

[How many readers wrote to denounce the editor for his views on gun control? Just about enough to constitute a firing squad.

And if you will compare the assertions of the letters with what I said, you will find an execution a miscarriage of justice.

And no, Lindy, my stand on lawful gun ownership does not extend to hunting, skeet shooting, or fishing. Wait a minute! *Fishing!* In my area it's illegal to shoot fish!  
—R.R.H.]



© 1992 by Joel Kauffmann

**On the News**

**Token Judeo**

"The United States is a Christian nation," explained Mississippi Governor Kirk Fordice at the news conference in Wisconsin following a meeting of Republican governors. In response, South Carolina Governor Carrol Campbell added that "the value base of this country comes from the Judeo-Christian heritage," and, in an aside to Fordice, Campbell said, "I just wanted to add the Judeo part." Apparently Fordice didn't. "If I wanted to do that," the Mississippian answered, "I would have done it." B'nai B'rith, an international Jewish organization devoted to fighting anti-Semitism, called Fordice's remarks "offensive." Of course, this "Christian nation" rhetoric has been bandied around for two centuries, even when America was importing slaves and wiping out its indigenous population. Apart from the offensiveness of the Governor's remark, was it even true? Someone should have asked Governor Fordice just what was, or is, so

Christian about this nation, anyway?

**Cautious Cuban Christians Eschew Communist Party Membership, Crowd Churches**

Cubans are going to church again as Communist Party members acknowledge that official atheism was a "huge mistake."

Says Methodist bishop Joel Ajo: "The revolution tried to make a new man and woman, and after 30 years, we realized that we've failed."

In October, after more than two decades of banning believers from the party, the Communist Party of Cuba abandoned its requirement that members be atheists. Today, officials welcome "Christian revolutionaries" to the ranks. They've found few takers. Religious leaders speculate that Castro hopes to control the churches by co-opting them and enlisting their moral arguments to get workers to increase productivity. The party has about 800,000 members—7 percent of the Cuban population. About 50 percent of Cuba's 10 million people are nominally

Catholic, but as recently as 1988 fewer than 100,000 were openly practicing. That number is down from 700,000 before the revolution. Prospering with Christian churches in the relaxed atmosphere are native African-Caribbean religions, such as Santeria.

*Religious News Service* is a resource for "On the News."

**Moving?**

Please notify us 4 weeks in advance

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address (new, if for change of address) \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

To subscribe to *Liberty* check rate below and fill in your name and address above. Payment must accompany order.

1 year \$6.95

Mail to:  
*Liberty* subscriptions, 55 West Oak Ridge Drive,  
Hagerstown, Maryland 21740.

ATTACH LABEL HERE for address change or inquiry. If moving, list new address above. Note: your subscription expiration date (issue, year) is given at upper right of label. Example: 0392L1 would end with third (May-June) issue of 1993.

# SCHOOL FOR MARTYRS

**S**pring mornings don't come much more beautiful in the mountains of northern Italy. And I was up at dawn to enjoy this one. My destination: an almost forgotten site in the heart of a Waldensian valley. A school that prepared ministers for martyrdom.

The footpath showed little sign of recent passage. It meandered through mountain gorges and over rocky ridges. *Not a throughway for the faint-hearted*, I thought. But then Waldensians were not known for cowardice. On a memorial in Paris I had seen the names of 5,000 of their colporteurs who had died for their faith. And on another day in the Cottian Alps of northern Italy I had entered the cave where 300 were trapped by papal armies and killed for their faith, every one of them.

The sun was well up when I came upon Praz du Tour, an almost deserted village. I entered a few of the ancient stone huts, bending low through their doorframes as the owners had had to. And at last my persistence was rewarded. In a room somewhat larger than others, I found a stone slab table, a small fireplace, and an inscription on the wall: "The

BY JACQUES FREI

*Jacques Frei is  
director of the Study  
Tour Agency in  
Lopagno, Switzerland.*

school of Barbe [Bearded]," the title of the teacher-preacher.

From the fourteenth to the sixteenth century, the school had trained young Waldenses who wished to devote themselves to the ministry. Their teachers were old, experienced. Called Uncles, they used only the Bible for their textbook. Students remained here during the winter seasons for three or four years. Their studies finished, they interned in a home for another year, as they sought spiritual maturity. Ordained at last, they left the valleys on their dangerous mission as colporteurs, serving until their strength gave out or they died as martyrs.

Their motto is still carved on the few churches serving the 30,000 Waldenses who remain in the high valleys: "The light shines in darkness." And for centuries it did, as they carried the gospel into the dark world of the Middle Ages. Disguised as merchants, they traveled through the whole of Europe, selling a "pearl" of great price. Where possible, they left a fragment of a handwritten Bible behind.

I have read the notarized reports of those tortured and killed. I have not the heart to repeat them.

I returned to my car. 



ILLUSTRATION BY ART LANDERMAN

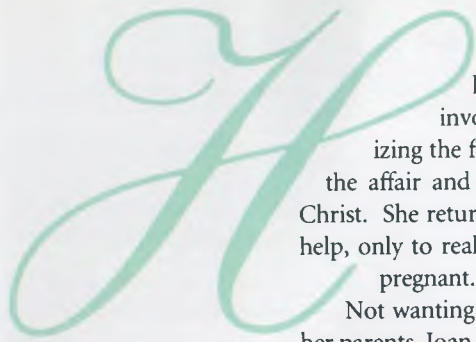
# Call to Compassion

WHY BEING PRO-LIFE ISN'T ENOUGH



BY RICHARD FREDERICKS





aving disassociated herself from her church and her parents after high school, Joan became involved with a married man. Realizing the futility of her lifestyle, she ended the affair and renewed her relationship with Christ. She returned to college with her parents' help, only to realize six weeks later that she was pregnant.

Not wanting to contact the father or involve her parents, Joan considered continuing the pregnancy and putting her baby up for adoption, but saw no way of finding a place to live and support herself. Her only options, she told her counselor, were suicide, abortion, or dropping out of school and disappearing.

After much indecision, Joan continued the pregnancy. When the baby was born, however, she decided to keep it. But, feeling so little acceptance from both her parents and her church, she was forced to take welfare. She now lives alone with the child. She has not returned to school and has no hope of doing so anytime soon.

The tragedy in this story is not Joan's courageous decision to spare the infant's life. Rather it belongs to the upper-middle-class Christian college community to whom she turned. From it Joan should have found, not platitudes, not "nonjudgmental feedback," but continuing assurance of God's forgiveness and help (in the context of her own recommitment to Him), followed by an outpouring of financial, medical, and emotional support. All these resources were available, and the reason God had given them was for this purpose.

Indeed, any church taking a stand against abortion should be willing to deal with the consequences. Talk is cheap. We need to love, not just "with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth" (1 John 3:18).<sup>\*</sup> To encourage women in crisis pregnancies to give their unborn child life, we must stand by them and help meet their needs. The real question is not "What should we tell a woman in crisis to do?" but rather, "What should we as Christ's disciples, do for her when she reaches out for help?"

Are we doing nothing to provide alternatives to abortion because we don't want our lives or prosperity disturbed? Like the world around us, have we become more worried about comfort and affluence than about affirming God's call: "I have set before you life and death. . . . Choose life" (Deuteronomy 30:19). To a life-affirming church, God is able to give abundantly so that we have "sufficiency in everything, . . . an abundance for every good deed" (2 Corinthians 9:8; see also Romans 8:30, 31).

William Willimon, a professor of Christian

ministry at Duke University, gives a practical and beautiful example of what it really means to be Christ's agent to someone in crisis:

"One Monday morning I was attending a minister's morning coffee hour. We got into a discussion about abortion. A bunch of older clergy were against it; a bunch of younger clergy for it. One of those who was against it asked, 'Now, wait a minute. You're not going to tell me that you think some 15- or 16-year-old is capable of bearing a child, are you?'

"Well,' the fellow replied, backing off a little, 'there are some circumstances when an abortion might be OK.'

"Sitting there stirring his coffee was a pastor of one of the largest black United Methodist churches in Greenville. He said, 'What's wrong with a 16-year-old giving birth? She can get pregnant, can't she?'

"Then we said, 'Joe, you can't believe a 16-year-old could care for a child.'

"He replied, 'No, I don't believe that. I don't believe a 26-year-old can care for a child. Or a 36-year-old. Pick any age. One person can't raise a child.'

"So I said, 'Look, Joe, the statistics show that by the year 1992, half of all American children will be raised in single-parent households.'

"So,' he replied. 'They can't do it.'

"We asked, 'What do you do when you have a 16-year-old get pregnant in your church?'

"He explained: 'Well, it happened last week. We baptized the baby last Sunday, and I said how glad we were to have this new member in our church. Then I called down an elderly couple in the church, and I said, "Now we're going to baptize this baby, and bring it into the family. What I want you all to do is raise this baby, and while you're doing that, raise the mama with it, because the mama now needs it." This couple are in their 60s, and they've raised about 20 kids. They know what they're doing. And I said, "If you need any of us, let us know. We're here. It's our child, too." That's what we do at my church.'"

As Christians our challenge is to find a better alternative than death in the face of economic and emotional problems. I am not so naive as to believe that such a compassionate response to the woman and her child can be legislated by a church. Such a response can, however, be implemented by individual Christians. Actions spring from attitudes, and we can help shape the attitudes of this church concerning abortion, the needs of women in crisis, and the meaning of authentic Christian discipleship. Armed with a commitment to life, and confident in the resources of our Creator, we are called

**Richard Fredericks, Ph.D., is pastor of the Damascus Seventh-day Adventist Church in Damascus, Maryland.**

to demonstrate Christ's alternative within a decaying society: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you" (John 13:34). "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45).

We must realize that all truly compassionate people are individually involved people. "And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed" (2 Corinthians 9:8).


By God's grace we have the resources to meet the medical, physical, financial, and relational needs of every woman within our sphere of influence. Believing that God's resources are adequate for the situations, we can preserve and affirm life for everyone involved.

A friend told me what one woman in Portland, Oregon, has been doing with the resources God has given her. He has a more liberal view on abortion than I, which made his admiration of her Christian witness all the more impressive.

For the record, call her Ellen. Each week, said my friend, Ellen gives a half day to a pro-life witness. She strolls near an abortion clinic until she sees a troubled teenager go in. She enters and sits next to the teenager in the waiting room. Taking out a magazine with lovely pictures of mothers with their babies, Ellen examines them. Often the teenager will notice the pictures, and Ellen will notice the tears in her eyes. Quietly Ellen will ask whether she would like to hear of an alternative to abortion that could put her child into a similarly happy picture. Often the two slip out to talk.

Ellen then offers to take the teenager into her own home, or place her in another home where she can live until after her baby is born. Room and board will cost her nothing, nor will birth and aftercare. Her baby will be placed in a home of her religious persuasion. A number of young women have gladly accepted this compassionate option to abortion.

"I don't particularly like this woman's politics," my friend told me. "Mine differ substantially from hers. But I must confess my admiration for her Christian witness, which is positive, sensitive, effective, and consistent with the finest in pro-life theology."

I like it too. I wish there had been an Ellen for Joan. 

---

\*All Scripture quotations in this article are from the *New American Standard Bible*, copyright The Lockman Foundation 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977.

## The Second Victim

Those who press for abortion rights see themselves as compassionate for the woman, yet there is increasingly obvious medical and psychological evidence that the woman is often abortion's second victim. True compassion, then, dictates alternative answers.

A growing body of medical literature somewhat begrudgingly admits the reoccurring negative physical and psychological consequences of abortion. These are viewed in two books: Anne Speckhard's *Psycho-Social Aspects of Stress Following Abortion*, and Pam Koerbel's *Abortion's Second Victim*.

Perhaps as many as 10 percent of all women who abort their first child are involuntarily made incapable of conceiving or carrying to term another child. These women, and hundreds are now just beginning to speak out, live with the realization that they chose to destroy the only child they will ever carry.

Also, abortion does not really solve the immediate emotional crisis. I have counseled with six students, one a close friend, following their abortions. The story is always sickeningly similar. Career plans, money, self-esteem, boyfriend's affection—abortion promised to keep all intact. They were told that the fetus was a hindrance to a happy life. The counselor at the clinic promised a quick return to freedom once the unwanted "blob of tissue" was removed quickly and painlessly (for only \$500).

In each case the abortion only deepened the crisis and hastened the already deteriorating relationships and self-worth. Two who had abortions in order to stay in school ended up leaving anyway. Another who had it against her will because of the extreme pressure of her parents and boyfriend now refuses to see either, and suffers from severe depression. Another, who worked in the women's residence hall after having a suction abortion, would vomit uncontrollably every time she turned on a vacuum sweeper.

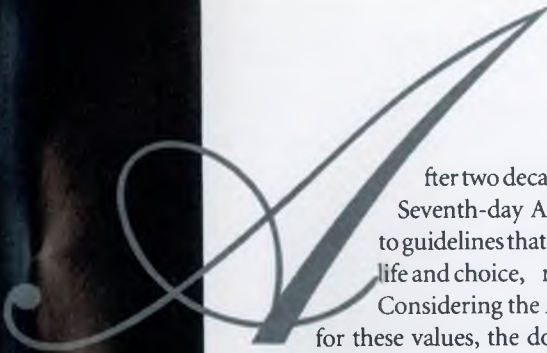
Koerbel cites a study of the emotional state of 46 randomly selected postabortion women. Eighty-seven percent reported increased guilt, 78 percent increased grief, and 76 percent increased remorse. Sixty-seven percent experienced added anger, and more than 60 percent struggled with shame and bitterness. As Dr. John Wilke stated: "It is easier to scrape the baby out of a woman's womb than to scrape the memory of that baby out of her conscience."

And this is *compassion*?—R.F.

# The Christian View of Human Life

BY MARTIN WEBER

## *Adventists Approve Guidelines Rather Than Edicts*



After two decades of travail over abortion, Seventh-day Adventist leaders gave birth to guidelines that attempt a balance between life and choice, responsibility and freedom. Considering the Adventist record of respect for these values, the document produced by delegates at the October Annual Council in Silver Spring, Maryland, was predictable. Its contents are well summarized in one introductory paragraph that, acknowledging human life to be “a magnificent gift of God,” affirms the “sanctity of human life, in God’s image, and requires respect for prenatal life.” And while the document, consistent with this acknowledgment, decries abortions for “reasons of birth control, gender selection, or convenience,” it acknowledges that “exceptional circumstances” call for personal freedom of choice.

“The seeming ambivalence in this statement is easily explained,” says Roland R. Hegstad, *Liberty* editor. “On the one hand, we don’t have a pope on the Potomac to tell us what we must do. On the other hand, we respect the church member’s right to make some very personal decisions in consultation not with church leaders but with the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus called our ‘Counselor.’”

Delegates seemed to agree, voting guidelines that said “women, at times . . . may face exceptional circumstances that present serious moral or medical dilemmas.” Those specified were: “significant threats to her health, serious congenital defects diagnosed in the fetus, and pregnancy resulting from rape or incest.” In these cases, said the document, the pregnant woman “should be aided in her decision by accurate information, biblical principles, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.”

Some delegates, nevertheless, sought to have threats to health and congenital defects removed from the list, fearing these reasons could be used to justify the abortions in the church’s extensive hospital system. “Women deciding for abortion based on these reasons,” responded Dr. Albert Whiting, chairman of the Christian View of Human Life Committee (CVHLC), which prepared the guide-

lines, “constitute less than five percent of those choosing to terminate a pregnancy. And the guidelines specifically state that abortions for ‘reasons of birth control, gender selection, or convenience are not condoned by the Church.’”

A minority view expressed by David Newman, editor of *Ministry* magazine, and Mildred Youngberg, of Family Life International, pointed to *Doe v. Bolton* (1973) in support of their concern. “*Doe*,” said Newman, “established emotional distress as a health matter. Therefore, a woman’s anxiety over the financial or occupational implications of motherhood could qualify her for a therapeutic abortion. Conceivably, a case could even be made for a gender selection abortion on the basis of health if the mother considered herself sufficiently distressed about getting another boy when she desperately wanted a daughter. Thus the ‘health of the mother’ provision could sabotage the explicit restraints of the guidelines.”

“Granted that the guidelines are subject to abuse,” responded Mitchell Tyner, a member of CVHLC. “But guidelines fit much better than edicts in the Adventist approach to church governance. And even edicts are only as strong as the will of the church. The explicit intent of the guidelines to preserve life is unmistakable.”

Most of the delegates agreed. The minority challenge failed to win sufficient support to recommend it to the official body for adoption.

### **Hospital Policy**

Significant in the mandate to clarify the church’s stand on abortion was the Adventist hospital system. A *Ministry* magazine survey had shown that only a minority of the hospitals in the Adventist Health System (U.S.A.) allowed abortions other than those strictly therapeutic. But church leaders felt that guidelines clearly addressing the moral and medical issues could bring uniformity.


A policy for Adventist hospitals, adopted in 1970, had approved termination of pregnancy only

"when continuation of the pregnancy may threaten the life of the woman or seriously impair her health," in case of a likely "birth of a child with grave physical deformities or mental retardation," or in case of rape or incest. In 1971, however, church leaders liberalized the policy, renaming it the "Interruption of Pregnancy Guidelines." The title itself caused confusion: If abortion merely interrupts pregnancy, how does one get it started again? Changes included omitting the word "seriously" before "health" of the mother and "grave" before "physical deformities." Abortion was permitted "when the case involves an unwed child under 15 years of age" and "when for some reason the requirements of functional human life demand the sacrifice of the lesser potential human value." Though most hospital administrators continued to interpret the policy conservatively, some church leaders felt the changes opened the door to abortion on demand.

#### Politics Intrude

A surprise awaited delegates on Friday, October 9, when the CVHLC guidelines were brought to the floor. Former General Conference president Neal Wilson urged that no statement on abortion be made so close to the U.S. presidential election. In addition to being controversial, the proposed guidelines, he said, contained inconsistencies. The 1971 hospital policy should be retained. Wilson moved to cut off debate and send the guidelines back to CVHLC. Though vigorous, protests were few; Wilson's motion carried.

However, Monday brought an unexpected development. General Conference president Robert S. Folkenberg took the unusual step of bringing the guidelines off the shelf and onto the floor. The church, he said, must take a stand on principle. He urged the delegates to reconsider their vote and approve the guidelines. After spirited discussion, including moves to jettison the section containing the phrase "serious jeopardy to her health," the guidelines were accepted, with only five dissenting.

The "spirited" discussion, one delegate suggested, referred to the harmonizing work of the Holy Spirit. If so, the work is not completed; the guidelines will not abort the pregnant issues concerning human life, nor are they intended to. "The work of the Christian View of Human Life Committee continues," said chairman Whiting. "The guidelines keep the door open for revision. For the time being, Seventh-day Adventists have an official document that affirms the sanctity of unborn human life, while compassionately acknowledging the right of a woman in some circumstances to consider an abortion." 

Many contemporary societies have faced conflict over the morality of abortion.\* Such conflict also has affected large numbers within Christianity who want to accept responsibility for the protection of prenatal human life while also preserving the personal liberty of women. The need for guidelines has become evident, as the Church attempts to follow Scripture, and to provide moral guidance while respecting individual conscience. Seventh-day Adventists want to relate to the question of abortion in ways that reveal faith in God as the Creator and Sustainer of all life and in ways that reflect Christian responsibility and freedom. Though honest differences on the question of abortion exist among Seventh-day Adventists, the following represents an attempt to provide guidelines on a number of principles and issues. The guidelines are based on broad biblical principles that are pre-

presented for study at the end of the document (see box).

1. Prenatal human life is a magnificent gift of God. God's ideal for human beings affirms the sanctity of human life, in God's image, and requires respect for prenatal life. However, decisions about life must be made in the context of a fallen world. Abortion is

never an action of little moral consequence. Thus prenatal life must not be thoughtlessly destroyed. Abortion should be performed only for the most serious reasons.

2. Abortion is one of the tragic dilemmas of human fallenness. The Church should offer gracious support to those who personally face the decision concerning an abortion. Attitudes of condemnation are inappropriate in those who have accepted the gospel. Christians are commissioned to become a loving, caring community of faith that assists those in crisis as alternatives are considered.

3. In practical, tangible ways the Church as a supportive community should express its commitment to the value of human life. These ways should include: (a) strengthening family relationships, (b) educating both genders concerning Christian principles of human sexuality, (c) emphasizing responsibility of both male and female for family planning,

---

\*Abortion, as understood in this document, is defined as any action aimed at the termination of a pregnancy already established. This is distinguished from contraception, which is intended to prevent pregnancy. The focus of the document is on abortion.

---

---

## *Seventh-day Adventist Guidelines on Abortion*

---

---

(d) calling both to be responsible for the consequences of behaviors that are inconsistent with Christian principles, (e) creating a safe climate for ongoing discussion of the moral questions associated with abortion, (f) offering support and assistance to women who choose to complete crisis pregnancies, and (g) encouraging and assisting fathers to participate responsibly in the parenting of their children. The Church also should commit itself to assist in alleviating the unfortunate social, economic, and psychological factors that may lead to abortion and to care redemptively for those suffering the consequences of individual decisions on this issue.

4. The Church does not serve as conscience for individuals; however, it should provide moral guidance. Abortions for reasons of birth control, gender selection, or convenience are not condoned by the Church. Women, at times however, may face exceptional circumstances that present serious moral or medical dilemmas, such as significant threats to the pregnant woman's life, serious jeopardy to her health, severe congenital defects carefully diagnosed in the fetus, and pregnancy resulting from rape or incest. The final decision whether to terminate the pregnancy should be made by the

**Christians  
acknowledge  
as first and  
foremost  
their  
accountability  
to God.**

pregnant woman after appropriate consultation. She should be aided in her decision by accurate information, biblical principles, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Moreover, these decisions are best made within the context of healthy family relationships.

5. Christians acknowledge as first and foremost their accountability to God. They seek balance between the exercise of individual liberty and their accountability to the faith community and the larger society and its laws. They make their choices according to Scripture and the laws of God rather than the norms of society. Therefore, any attempts to coerce women either to remain pregnant or to terminate pregnancy should be rejected as infringements of personal freedom.

6. Church institutions should be provided with guidelines for developing their own institutional policies in harmony with this statement. Persons having a religious or ethical objection to abortion should not be required to participate in the performance of abortions.

7. Church members should be encouraged to participate in the ongoing consideration of their moral responsibilities with regard to abortion in light of the teaching of Scripture. □

**" PRINCIPLES FOR A CHRISTIAN VIEW OF HUMAN LIFE "**

**Introduction**

"Now this is eternal life; that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent" (John 17:3, NIV). In Christ is the promise of eternal life; but since human life is mortal, humans are confronted with difficult issues regarding life and death. The following principles refer to the whole person (body, soul, and spirit), an indivisible whole (Genesis 2:7; 1 Thessalonians 5:23).

**Life: Our Valuable Gift From God**

1. God is the Source, Giver, and Sustainer of all life (Acts 17:25, 28; Job 33:4; Genesis 1:30, 2:7; Psalm 36:9; John 1:3, 4).

2. Human life has unique value because human beings, though fallen, are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27; Romans 3:23; 1 John 2:2; 1 John 3:2; John 1:29; 1 Peter 1:18, 19).

3. God values human life not on the basis of human accomplishments or contributions but because we are God's creation and the object of His redeeming love (Romans 5:6, 8; Ephesians 2:2-6; 1 Timothy 1:15; Titus 3:4, 5; Matthew 5:43-48; Ephesians 2:4-9; John 1:3, 10:10).

**Life: Our Response to God's Gift**

4. Valuable as it is, human life is not the only or ultimate concern. Self-sacrifice in devotion to God and His principles may take precedence over life itself (Revelation 12:11; 1 Corinthians 13).

5. God calls for the protection of human life and holds humanity accountable for its destruction (Exodus 20:13; Revelation 21:8; Exodus 23:7; Deuteronomy 24:16; Proverbs 6:16, 17; Jeremiah 7:3-34; Micah 6:7; Genesis 9:5, 6).

6. God is especially concerned for the protection of the weak, the defenseless, and the oppressed (Psalm 82:3, 4; James 1:27; Micah 6:8; Acts 20:35; Proverbs 24:11, 12; Luke 1:52-54).

7. Christian love (*agape*) is the costly dedication of our lives to enhancing the lives of others. Love also respects personal dignity and does not condone the oppression of one person to support the abusive behavior of another

(Matthew 16:21; Philippians 2:1-11; 1 John 3:16; 1 John 4:8-11; Matthew 22:39; John 18:22, 23; John 13:34).

8. The believing community is called to demonstrate Christian love in tangible, practical, and substantive ways. God calls us to restore gently the broken (Galatians 6:1, 2; 1 John 3:17, 18; Matthew 1:23; Philippians 2:1-11; John 8:2-11; Romans 8:1-14; Matthew 7:1, 2, 12:20; Isaiah 40:42, 62:2-4).

**Life: Our Right and Responsibility to Decide**

9. God gives humanity the freedom of choice, even if it leads to abuse and tragic consequences. His unwillingness to coerce human obedience necessitated the sacrifice of His Son. He requires us to use His gifts in accordance with His will and ultimately

will judge their misuse. (Deuteronomy 30:19, 20; Genesis 3; 1 Peter 2:24; Romans 3:5, 6; Romans 6:1, 2; Galatians 5:13).

10. God calls each of us individually to moral decision-making and to search the Scriptures for the biblical principles underlying such choices (John 5:39; Acts 17:11; 1 Peter 2:9; Romans 7:13-25).

11. Decisions about human life from its beginning to its end are best made within the context of healthy family relationships with the support of the faith community (Exodus 20:12; Ephesians, 5, 6).

12. Human decisions should always be centered in seeking the will of God (Romans 12:2; Ephesians 6:6; Luke 22:42).

T

BY ROLAND R. HEGSTAD

oday, despite economic and social problems, Bulgarians are celebrating their release from the tyranny of Communism.

Tomorrow, despite the success of early experiments in freedom, they may rue the constraints of another tyranny—the tyranny of the righteous.

I spoke of this tyranny recently while interviewing Methodi Spassov, the Bulgarian minister of religious affairs, in Sofia. Evangelical spokesmen had briefed me on opposition to their ministries by the Bulgarian Orthodox Church. And, to my regret, I had learned that the new Bulgarian constitution acknowledges Orthodoxy as the “traditional” religion of the country.

Adding to my concerns were two factors: that church’s hostility to and persecution of so-called sects and cults during its status as the official church of Bulgaria prior to World War II, and its attempts to reassert its hegemony throughout Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union since the collapse of Communist governments.

I knew that Spassov himself was Orthodox. Was he also prejudiced against evangelicals? And why had the democratic Bulgarian government established a Department of Religious Affairs? Konstantin Kharchev, former minister of religious affairs for the Soviet Union, had once told me that he hoped even the need for such a department would disappear—as it has, not only in a number of the republics that emerged from the Soviet empire but also in other countries of Eastern Europe.

Spassov, in his mid-60s, is lean and athletic, much as he must have been while establishing 100- and 200-yard-dash records for Bulgaria. He is a lawyer and a politician who once served as mayor of an incorporated area within Sophia. On a Sunday afternoon in May, I met with him in his home at 1618 Zagrebika, a quiet residential street. With me were Vasalim Volchanoff, secretary for the Department of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty of the Bulgarian Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, and translator Nikolai Konstantinov. A colleague of Spassov’s, Michael Mehotios, was present also.

Sunday was Spassov’s birthday, as I learned. Still, he graciously spent two hours discussing issues that, I assumed, would not have been featured on Bulgarian birthday cards. And before guests arrived for an evening celebration, his wife shared a generous piece of his birthday cake, so good that I’m still trying to get the recipe.

Getting back to the potential tyranny of the righteous was





*Above:* Alexander Nevski Cathedral .

*Right:* Monuments advertise Sofia's antiquity—its heroes of wars well fought, its centuries-long tradition of Orthodox worship. The horseman is Russian king Alexander II, who started the Russo-Turkish war in 1877 and liberated Bulgaria from Turkish occupation.



*Inset:* Scores of limousines from Sofia's diplomatic community flank St. Alexander Nevski Cathedral, named after a Russian medieval prince and army general. The diplomatic presence emphasizes the importance embassies attach to Bulgaria's traditional linkage with the Orthodox Church.



more easily accomplished. Why had Bulgaria, signatory to the Vienna Accords, the Helsinki Accords, and other documents concerning religious liberty, given the Orthodox Church a preferred position in the new constitution? Spassov's reply: he preferred, he said, to think of the inclusion simply as recognition of "historical reality."

But the historical reality included denial of religious liberty, I pointed out. Prior to World War II, state churches denied free exercise of conscience throughout Eastern Europe. In fact, Communism was, in a sense, an anticlerical movement in response to oppressive church-state alliances. And now Orthodoxy, in the nations emerging from the Soviet empire, and in Romania and Bulgaria, was seeking the hegemony it had once exercised. Not that Orthodoxy alone sought solace and support from the state; the Roman Catholic Church in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland once again was seeking to deny evangelical incursions. In the Baltic states, Lutheranism too did not wish to compete on level ground.

And did not Spassov himself, as an Orthodox churchman, favor Orthodoxy? "I think of myself first and foremost, not as a fanatic Orthodox church member," he replied, "but as a passionate Christian. As minister of religious affairs, I am charged to enforce the law. And the new law of Bulgaria does not favor one church over another."

Though the constitution gives honor to the Orthodox Church because of its numbers and history, he said, the law does not confer more rights on it. "During the Communist period, the church was seized and controlled by the totalitarian regime. It was forced to serve the objectives of the Communists. Its official policy was one of destructive nonaction in the face of persecution. Many priests were slaughtered, many churches destroyed or converted to secular use."

Spassov spoke admiringly of priests who had refused to compromise their conscience. He was not so admiring of current Orthodox leadership. "The Holy Synod is a reminder of that era," he said. The Orthodox patriarch Maxim, he charged, was in office only because the Communist government had interfered in church affairs, and, in his opinion, would not be in office much longer.



*Above:* Even modest apartments feature heroic figures. These are between 80 and 90 years old.

*Inset:* Metody Spassov, Bulgaria's minister of religious affairs, contemplates a piece of birthday cake prepared by his wife.



*Left:* The Sofia Mosque, visited mostly by foreigners. Few of Bulgaria's 900,000 Muslims live in Bulgaria's capital.



**Below:** Thousands throng Sofia's Alexander Nevski Square on May 24, the official holiday of Bulgarian culture, as Patriarch Maxim, head of the Orthodox Church, celebrates ninth-century saints Cyril and Methodius. The two (inset) invented the Bulgarian alphabet and translated the Bible into

the Slavonic language, spoken at that time by Bulgarians, Russians, Serbs, and others. Cyril and Methodius are canonized by the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church as patron saints of Europe.



I asked him bluntly for his personal views on proselytism. Should evangelicals have freedom to witness?

Legally, he responded, they have that right. And according to his own convictions, they should have. "While the Orthodox Church sleeps," he said, "evangelicals are showing great initiative and adding many members. Orthodox priests are indignant at this proselytizing. They see themselves as defenders and purveyors of the gospel and public morality. But," he said, "the rivalry among churches should be on level ground. And may the best man win."

Spassov blamed Orthodox membership losses on use of Latin in the church. "No one can understand it. I have suggested to the patriarch and others that they conduct services in the language of the people, but they are unresponsive."

"I will tell you of an incident," he said. "A village woman came to me a few weeks ago. She said that she got no spiritual benefit from Orthodox services. She couldn't understand them. And candles and icons did nothing for her. So, she told me, she had converted to an evangelical church.

"I defended her right to do so," Spassov said, nodding emphatically. "And not only did I tell her my opinion, I conveyed it to the Holy Synod. And what was the result? They charged me with interfering in church affairs."

Spassov emphasized that he interceded in religious matters only in accordance with law. And I knew of at least one case in which he had done so. A few weeks before my trip to Bulgaria, I told him, I had heard of an incident in a town near Sophia. Seventh-day Adventists had secured permission to use a swimming pool for a baptism, only to have the mayor reverse himself after protests from Orthodox clergy. Informed of the situation, Spassov had told the mayor that the new law of religious freedom must be observed. The baptism proceeded. Spassov nodded at my account. He appeared impressed that news of his action had reached me in Washington, D.C.

We discussed the law of restoration, under which property is to be returned to Christian, Jewish, and Muslim believers. Initially, Spassov said, "the law had no teeth, though it



**Above:** Graffiti mars statues in Boris' Park, renamed in 1991 for King Boris II, the last Bulgarian monarch before the Communist coup of 1944.

**Right:** Bulgarians greet Russian liberators, one on a motorcycle mounting—if the graffiti is to be credited—GoodYear tires.

**Below:** The victor sits on the vanquished, and even a schoolboy expects a happy ending.



did, in principle, mandate restoration.” Decrees of the previous year had ensured progress, but part of the problem was that the laws had not even been made public. The compilations being made of properties that had been nationalized by the Communists would be published. And even money taken by the secret police, Spassov assured me, would be returned.

I could be sympathetic; most Eastern European countries, the republics of the former Soviet Union and even China were wrestling with the intricacies of restoration. To mention just one complexity with which the governments have to contend: What to do when former church buildings have been converted into apartments, and other housing is not available for displaced families. Spassov chose this point in our discussion to argue the need for his office, which must implement the law.

When I introduced the question of religious freedom for Bulgaria's 900,000 Muslims, which the Western press had indicated was an issue, Spassov simply repeated that the new law mandated freedom for all 29 recognized religions among Bulgaria's 9 million citizens. He did refer to five centuries of Turkish yoke that, he said, had left a residue of social problems.

To the problem list I added respect for holy days, including Sabbath examinations in universities, which keep some students from completing their degrees. “These matters,” he said, “are being debated in government. We are examining the manner in which such issues are handled by Western governments.

“You must realize,” Spassov said, a bit wearily, “Bulgaria has been liberated from Communism but not from Communists. This is a major reason we are making slow progress in some areas of human rights.”

Several evangelical groups have invited Spassov to be their guest during a coming visit to the United States. He has another reason for being here: two Bulgarian Orthodox factions are contending for ownership of properties. Perhaps his experience with the law of restoration will serve him well in mediating the dispute.

I've invited him to have dinner at my home. I've promised that there will be no talk about religious liberty problems in Bulgaria—at least not if he can convince his wife to share that cake recipe . . . ☐

# “THEY TOOK OUR SCHOOL”

*Lynwood Academy students  
and faculty have found that exercise of religion  
may not, indeed, be free!*

BY MARILYN THOMSEN

Clyde Allen, a black businessman in his late 40s, had an uncharacteristically sad look as he walked his daughter, LaTanya, through registration at Lynwood Adventist Academy last August 30. Like every member of his immediate family, he had graduated from Lynwood—the class of 1963. His son, Clyde Allen III, was in the class of 1990. LaTanya, a sophomore, is the last family member to attend this suburban Seventh-day Adventist high school.

She will also be the first not to graduate from the 54-year-old Seventh-day Adventist academy—at least at its present site, five miles from Watts. This January 29 the Lynwood faculty will close the gates on its 21.76-acre campus, pack up the computers, lab equipment and library books, and move into portable classrooms at a 60-year-old elementary school six miles away.

Then, the California Spanish stucco-and-tile facility—with nearly as much square footage under roof as the Great Western Forum, home of the Lakers—will be razed.

The Lynwood Unified School District took the property on June 17, 1992, by eminent domain after a five-and-a-half-year fight. With urban land and school funds in increasingly short supply, this scenario raises questions that could be repeated in private and parochial institutions nationwide: Must a religious school be dis-

placed to accommodate a public school? If so, should not the compensation be adequate for the church to continue its spiritual and educational mission nearby?

Of all the reasons for eminent domain, public education ranks near the top. Hardly anyone—certainly not Clyde Allen and his family—doubts that a new high school is badly needed in Lynwood, population 61,945, once designed as an all-American city. Lynwood High School, built to accommodate 1,976 students and now bulging with 3,284 ninth through twelfth graders, has adopted a year-round school calendar to maximize its facilities.

## The Dilemma Begins

The Seventh-day Adventist Church's dilemma began in 1984, when a real estate agent for the

Lynwood Unified School Board inquired whether the Southern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists would be willing to sell their property located along Imperial Highway near the Long Beach freeway. At the time, the board was considering other options. An industrial site was not considered safe enough for student use. Residential areas were ruled out because of the families that would have to be uprooted. Finally the search narrowed to two locations: Ham Park, a city recreation area, and the Adventist school and



Marilyn Thomsen is director of the office of Public Relations and Media for the Southern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Glendale, California.

PHOTOS BY THE AUTHOR

adjoining commercial property owned by the Sterik Company and leased to a Ralph's grocery store.

To take any property posed problems. The city council would have to approve appropriating the Ham Park site because one government agency cannot take the property of another. The city council claimed that a deed restricted uses to a park.

Condemning the Adventist property was not controversy-free, either. "Nobody wanted us to take anything," recalls Helen Andersen, a member of the Lynwood Unified School Board from 1980 to 1988. The attitude was "Take somebody else's."

In spite of Lynwood Academy's scholastic reputation and the protest and opposition of a significant part of the community, the Lynwood Unified School Board chose the site for their high school.

Church leaders feared this precedent. The Seventh-day Adventist Church operates 18 elementary and secondary schools in Los Angeles County, many in crowded urban areas. What was to keep other jurisdictions from taking some of them? Because parochial schools are not on property tax rolls and do not generate sales tax revenues, "they are politically expedient for taking," says Lawrence Thompson, an eminent domain specialist on the church's legal team. "It's the path of least resistance."

Church members couldn't believe that the parochial school that had educated their children for half a century could be taken over by a public school without their consent. During 40 years of massive expansion, the Los Angeles Unified School District had never displaced a private or parochial school. National spokesmen for the Catholic and Lutheran school systems, the nation's two largest, cannot recall a parochial school being taken over by eminent domain.

Adventists believed the courts would find the action unconstitutional on religious liberty grounds—though California, like other states, has a precedent allowing church sites to be taken for public use. In fact, California law does not hold to higher standards in condemning church property than in condemning any other private property. "Absent showing that the acquisition deprives a congregation of the ability to carry on worship," says Thompson, "you're not going to win on the free expression of religion grounds."

Deprivation was the basis of the Adventist protest. As the church searched for suitable land on which to rebuild, it found what the school district had already discovered—little land available in south Los Angeles County anywhere near Lynwood, and hefty prices. With the school district offering only \$6.1 million—the lower of its two

## New Law Now Protects Nonprofit Properties

**C**ould the Lynwood Adventist Academy appropriation be repeated at other parochial schools in California?

A bill passed by the state legislature and signed into law by Governor Pete Wilson last February makes it unlikely. The new legislation requires public agencies to demonstrate to the court that the nonprofit special-use property targeted is the only reasonable site. It also makes replacement cost—without deducting for depreciation—an option for juries determining the value of special-use property taken by eminent domain from churches and other nonprofit entities. This assumes, of course, a court's acceptance of the property as special use.

"Church educational properties are at special risk of eminent domain action," says Jerry Wiley, vice dean of the University of Southern California Law Center and a leading force behind the bill. "Their uniqueness virtually guarantees that there will be no comparable sales to assist in traditional appraisals—making them candidates for lowball offers." They are also not eligible for the level of relocation assistance offered to home owners, nor the extra compensation for lost good will granted to for-profit businesses, he notes.

To avoid unconstitutionally favoring religion, SB §21, introduced into the California state senate by Nicholas Petris, Democrat from Oakland, was written to include all nonprofit charitable and religious organizations.

A coalition of more than 20 not-for-profit organizations supported the measure. Included were the Association of Christian Schools International, representing more than 770 schools; California Catholic Charities; the California Council of Churches; and the California Association of Hospitals, representing 480 hospitals.

Though opposed by the League of California Cities and the state Departments of Transportation and General Services—which saw it as potentially costly—the bill received strong bipartisan support. It passed the senate on a vote of 33-0 and the assembly by 65-1.

The bill, however, did not help Lynwood Academy. Only actions begun after January 1, 1993, fall under its jurisdiction.

appraised values—for Lynwood Academy’s 21.76 acres, the church could not afford to purchase land and replicate its facilities elsewhere in the community.

Despite the opposition, the school board voted on December 12, 1986, to begin the lawsuit required to appropriate Lynwood. It argued that its resolution of necessity was conclusive as to all legal challenges, including the constitutional. Perhaps in an effort to avoid a direct religious freedom issue, the board severed the 3.1 acres on which the Lynwood Seventh-day Adventist Church is located from the part to be taken.

In so doing, however, the school board failed to recognize that the church facilities were used by the school for its religious curriculum. “Church and school—in proximity to each other—are important to the accomplishment of the work of the church,” said G. Charles Dart, president of the Southern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Church members responded by organizing letter-writing and telephone campaigns. They held marches and rallies. They urged the city council to declare the school site a historical landmark, hoping that would make the taking more difficult. The academy principal even ran a losing campaign for a seat on the city council.

Finally, the church retained attorneys to press its religious freedom case. At the first pretrial conference, held on July 10, 1987, with pro tempore judge Herbert Klein in Los Angeles Superior Court, the church presented 20 issues, among them these key constitutional questions:

- Does taking parochial school property violate the Free Exercise or Establishment Clauses of the First Amendment?
- Is the school district’s legislative determination of public necessity void because it failed to weigh public necessity against the church’s right to free exercise of religion?
- Did the school district act in bad faith in considering the church school’s tax exempt status as a factor in choosing it among competing sites? Did their action violate the neutrality between religious and nonreligious schools, required by the First Amendment?
- Does the First Amendment require that the church be compensated with enough money to reestablish its current operations at a new location in the community?

On July 6, 1988, Judge Klein denied the church’s First Amendment arguments, leaving open for trial only issues pertaining to fair market value and severance damage to the property not taken, and whether the church must be compensated ad-

equately to reestablish the school at a new site. Within weeks, lawyers acting for the church appealed to the California Court of Appeal and then to the California Supreme Court. Both appeals were denied without comment.

Stymied by the courts on First Amendment grounds, the church focused its attention on the cost of rebuilding. Estimates to reproduce the facility—including classroom buildings, the Adventist Book Center, cafeteria, and a gymnasium large enough for four full basketball courts—ran as high as \$33 million, far more than the school district’s appraisal of \$6.1 million.

On April 8, 1991, Judge Klein convened a legal issues trial to set parameters for the valuation trial. Church attorneys, with Hodge Dolle as trial lawyer, said the school should be considered a “special” use property. As such, its worth should be measured by reproduction costs, not fair market value.

Further, the church attorneys argued that



Adventist rights to free exercise of religion required that condemnation of their church school property be done with minimal burden to their religious practices. This meant, they said, that sufficient compensation must be paid to reestablish the school at a comparable site in the community, without considering any offset for depreciation. As co-counsel Jerry Wiley put it: “You can’t build” old.”

The school district legal team, headed by Arnold K. Graham, countered that not only did a relevant market for the property exist, but a fair market value could be established using comparable sales. Graham cited more than 20 property sales involving schools and churches throughout Los Angeles County. Not one, however, was in Lynwood. The closest school sale was, ironically, an Adventist elementary school in Santa Monica, more than 15 miles away.

While conceding that an appraiser could deem the site a special-use property, Judge Klein on May

14, 1991, agreed with the school district that comparable sales could be found. He then ruled that the United States and California constitutions do not require that the church be entitled to replacement cost without depreciation. He left it to the judge in the trial phase to determine whether fair market value or reproduction costs minus depreciation was the appropriate way to achieve just compensation.

Trial was set to begin on November 19, 1991, in Los Angeles Superior Court. On November 26, however, Judge David Workman, appointed to hear the case, granted the school district's motion to select a court-appointed appraiser. A previous judge had denied the motion twice. The new appraisal, which came in at \$12.8 million for the school property, was the school district's final offer

courtroom.

The three-week trial involved a battle of the appraisers, with a generous number of objections interrupting arcane details of eminent domain law.

After closing arguments in which opposing counsels tried to reduce the mountain of facts to comprehensible dimensions, the jury began deliberation. Five days later, on a 10-2 vote, they awarded \$13.5 million for the 21.76 acres of school property. As severance damage to the Lynwood church property not taken, they gave \$50,000.

Posttrial interviews with jurors revealed widely disparate camps. Some had wanted to vote a low figure; others a judgment of \$18 million or more. The rest were somewhere in the middle. Only one juror believed that the original school district appraiser produced a credible report. On July 16, 1992, the Lynwood Unified School District deposited a check for \$13.55 million with the superior court and moved for immediate possession of the Lynwood Academy property. To facilitate an orderly transition to a new location, Judge Workman ruled that the Adventists could remain until the end of the first semester of the new school year.

In mid-August the Seventh-day Adventist Church officially closed the 132-student Lynwood Adventist Elementary School portion of the complex, which had been in existence for more than a generation.

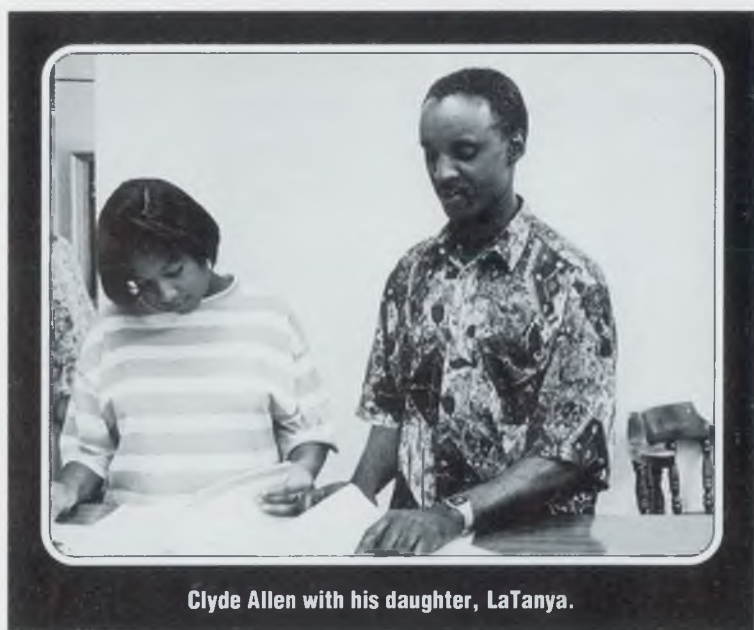
"We just did not feel it was educationally sound to move grade school children to a new location in the middle of the school year," said Lorenzo W. Paytee, chairman of the conference's board of education. Teachers were reassigned, and parents received a \$300 credit toward tuition at another Adventist school.

In the second semester, Lynwood Academy students will move into temporary quarters at an Adventist elementary school in Willowbrook, near Compton. The campus is much smaller—10 acres. There is no gymnasium.

The Lynwood Seventh-day Adventist Church is up for sale at an asking price of \$3.5 million. The members plan to merge with a church in nearby Whittier.

There's no telling how many of LaTanya Allen's friends will graduate from Lynwood Academy—or whatever the school is called then—with her. "A lot of them haven't come back since they took our school," she says.

Since 1986 the Seventh-day Adventist Church has spent more than \$2 million in legal fees on this case. Lynwood Academy dropped in enrollment from 219 students in 1984 to 72 in 1992. As the Seventh-day Adventist Church has learned, free exercise of religion can be expensive. □



Clyde Allen with his daughter, LaTanya.

at a mandatory settlement conference. The church countered with \$16 million, setting the stage for the trial.

The jury selected from a panel of Los Angeles County residents was strikingly youthful and ethnic. Of the six men and six women, five were African-American, five Hispanic, one Asian, and one Caucasian. Not one was a property owner, the school district having used its preemptory challenges to remove property owners from the panel.

Judge Workman, a graying jurist in his mid-50s, appeared determined to keep attention focused only on the case. At one point he ordered both attorneys to stop wearing their expensive hand-painted ties, explaining that they could distract the jury. Another time, he forbade an observer in the public seating to unwrap cough drops in the

# W

hat is at stake in the European Economic Community's try at playing God?

"God said everyone should have a day off a week. Muslims chose Fridays, Jews Saturdays, Christians Sundays. Now the European Community is pretending to be God. It is about to decree that European Community citizens must take Sundays off."

The opinion—that of *The Economist*, one of Europe's more respected newspapers—is right on four counts, wrong on one. The European Community is seeking a community-wide Sunday law, and in so doing is usurping a prerogative of God. Muslims *did* choose Friday for their day of worship, and the majority of Christians *have* chosen to worship on Sunday. But the Jews and a minority of Christians did *not* choose Saturday as the Sabbath; God chose it for them. Four out of five—not bad. *The Economist*, after all, does not profess to be a journal of theology.

You've heard *The Economist's* opinion. Now hear the question—that of *Liberty*, a magazine of religious freedom: Who is backing the European Community's Sunday law and why? *The Economist* offers a partial answer; *Liberty* will give you the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help us God, who, after all, commanded His loyal creation to "remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Exodus 20:8, KJV). For the record, the Sabbath is the day following Friday, and preceding Sunday, the first day of the week. That fact should cue you: more may be at stake in the European Community's try at playing God than meets the eye.

It happened this way:

Recognizing the desirability of a weekly day of family togetherness, the European Commission originally prepared a draft that mandated a weekly rest day without specifying which day it should be. The European Parliament amended the draft, designating Saturday-Sunday as the period of rest. The cabinet, it appears, under pressure settled on Sunday.

Who applied the pressure?

*The Economist* correctly points its finger at "an awesome combination of German Christian Democrats . . . and German trade unionists" who secured the support of the European Commission for what it calls "the Sunday absurdity." Said German Christian Democrat Elmar Brok, a member of the European Parliament, "It is impossible to have different competition conditions in different parts of the internal market." The only solution, he said, is to have "a Brussels-administered Sunday."

Christian Democrats? German trade unionists? The truth, but not the whole truth. Throughout the European Community, Roman Catholic prelates and politicians spearhead the campaign for Sunday closings. The cooperation is not coincidental: they follow the party platform as laid down in the January 1990 papal encyclical *Centesimus Annus* (One hundredth Year), in which, while asserting his church's right and authority to define truth and to arbitrate its claims in society, Pope John Paul II

indicates support for a state-enforced Sunday.

Pope John XXIII's 1961 encyclical *Mater et Magistra* (Mother and Teacher) is even more emphatic in its demands: "The church has always demanded an exact observance of . . . the Sabbath day

## THE SUNDAY

# ABSURDITY

*Liberty* foreign correspondent David N. Marshall,  
editor at Stanborough Press Ltd., in Alma Park, Grantham, England,  
provided material for this report.

## THE EUROPEAN SUNDAY

Though all 12 European Community members have Sunday laws, enforcement varies greatly. Here is the situation in five:

- Germany has and enforces the strictest Sunday laws in Europe. In fact, its Sunday closing begins on Saturday afternoon. The laws aim to preserve the public peace of Sunday and protect worker rights. Unions, small shopkeepers, department stores, and churches oppose relaxation of the regulations.

- Holland: Amsterdam bookshops stay open on Sunday despite strict regulations prohibiting it. Elsewhere in the Netherlands, foodshops, even a clothing chain, open on Sunday.

- France has one law establishing the right to do business on Sunday, another that makes Sunday a compulsory day of rest. In March 1992 the French trade minister piloted an act through Parliament increasing from three to six the number of days on which "cultural outlets," including record, and video shops, could open (meaning, in effect, Sunday openings).

- England: Attorney General Sir Patrick Mayhew has let it be known that he is turning a blind eye to Sunday trading. He said he would leave it to the discretion of local governments to enforce a 1950 Sunday-closing law.

- Ireland grants exemption to anyone who wants to do business on Sunday, though it has left old Sunday laws on the books.

[Sunday]." He called upon all "public authorities, employers, and workers" to observe "the sanctity of Sunday." Four months later, on September 21, 1961, the pope told an international group of trade unionists meeting in Rome that achieving this objective "presupposes a change of mind in society and the intervention of the powers of the state."

Intervening on behalf of the European Sunday law are France, Italy, and Belgium, all strongly Catholic. Not surprising, since Catholic authorities have long pointed to the church's changing of the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday as a sign of its spiritual authority. Here are examples:

1. From Peter Geiermann's *Convert's Catechism of Catholic Doctrine* (1957):

Q. Which is the Sabbath day?

A. Saturday is the Sabbath day.

Q. Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday?

A. We observe Sunday instead of Saturday

because the Catholic Church transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday.

2. Vincent J. Kelly, *Forbidden Sunday and Feast-Day Occupations*: "The fact, however, that Christ until His death, and His apostles at least for a time after Christ's ascension, observed the Sabbath is evidence enough that our Lord Himself did not substitute the Lord's day for the Sabbath, during His lifetime on earth. Instead, as most agree, He simply gave His church the power to determine the days to be set aside for the special worship of God" (pp. 19, 20).

3. *The Christian Sabbath*, 2nd ed. (first published

in the *Catholic Mirror* in 1893): "The Catholic Church for over one thousand years before the existence of a Protestant, by virtue of her divine mission, changed the day from Saturday to Sunday" (p. 29).

The Roman Catholic Church in many countries and for hundreds of years has claimed that it changed the Sabbath. But it does more: it chides Protestants, who profess to follow the Bible, for accepting a day of worship owing its existence only to its authority:

Again from *The Christian Sabbath*: "But the Protestant says: How can I receive the teachings of an apostate church? How, we ask, have you managed to receive her teaching all your life, *in direct opposition* to your recognized teacher, the Bible, on the Sabbath question? . . . The Christian Sabbath [the author means Sunday—Ed.] is therefore *to this day* the acknowledged offspring of the Catholic Church . . . without a word of remonstrance from the Protestant world" (pp. 29-31).

Not only is there no remonstrance to the European Community's projected Sunday law, but with the exception of Seventh-day Adventists, Protestants are among its ardent advocates. One example: A British pressure group backed by churches, trade unions, and retailers joined Cardinal Basil Hume, head of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in Britain, to "keep Sunday special." Also on the bandwagon: the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Moderator of the Free Church Council, and, curiously, the chief rabbi.

Few within the European Community or without would challenge a one-day-in-seven law offering family togetherness. Muslim families likely would choose Friday; Jewish and Sabbathkeeping Christian groups, Saturday; and Catholics and most Protestants, Sunday—each as conscience and tradition would dictate. No one of church or state would be playing God.

But, as *The Economist* perceives, the proposed Sunday law is something else. It specifies a traditional Christian day of worship. And does so in disregard of the convictions of Muslims, as well as Jews and seventh-day Sabbathkeeping Christians. (And let it be noted: Seventh-day Adventists would oppose a civil Sabbath law as vigorously as they oppose a civil Sunday law.)

Anyone aware of Europe's sad history of religious persecution, in which the Sabbath-Sunday controversy has not been absent, should, confronted with the EC's plans, head for a fire alarm. Admittedly, a knowledge of prophecy might speed one's step. In either case, the conclusion would be the same: *playing God can be hazardous to one's health.* ☐



# THE CASE OF THE OVERLOOKED LAW

*I had encountered evidence that contradicted long-held personal convictions—in my case, held as a Christian committed to the teachings of Christ. What should be my decision?*

The legal profession wrestles with all manner of questions, ranging from personal injury claims and will contests to issues of constitutional interpretation. When a statute is involved, a court will first look at its plain language, and if its meaning is not clear the judge must go behind its face by examining its legislative history to determine what the legislators intended. He must also explore whether its operative effect may have an unconstitutional impact. Particularly difficult may be cases that challenge the judge's personal moral convictions, but these cases, like other lawsuits, must be decided not by the judge's personal ethic but by law.

Not all such issues, however, come to the court. Some come to the attorney or judge as a person. What must be his decision when he encounters evidence that contradicts long-held personal convictions—in my case, held as a Christian committed to the teachings of Christ?

Most of my Christian acquaintances acknowledge that their convictions must be derived from and decided by the Bible. They will attest that it is inspired and is the greatest book ever written. Yet few invest much time in studying it. Until some 15 years ago I fell into that category. My "higher education" came from a university and a law school. During my youth I attended a Congregational church, and later Presbyterian and



*Above the Supreme Court justices, two Homeric figures, Majesty of Law and Power of Government, flank the Ten Commandments. Majesty of Law's knee hides the fourth—"Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy...."*

**BY ALAN C. KAY**

*When Alan C. Kay wrote this article he was an attorney who had practiced law in Honolulu, Hawaii for 25 years. He has subsequently become a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Kay now serves as Chief Judge of the United States District Court of Hawaii.*

nondenominational evangelical churches. Thus I had always gone to church on Sunday, and had never really given a second thought to worshipping on any other day.

But when I began to study the Bible in earnest, I was confronted by a point of law I had somehow overlooked. In the heart of God's Ten Commandments I found a plain command to honor the Sabbath on the seventh day of the week—that is, Saturday.

Why, then, I asked myself, did most Christians worship on Sunday, the first day, contrary to the obvious intent of the fourth commandment? The inspired instruction on how to resolve such an issue was clear—by examining the Scriptures daily to see "whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11). So I studied the Word. I also sought guidance from many ministers, as well as professors at the nondenominational seminary that my wife and I attended during a six-month sabbatical from my law practice.

In my pursuit of truth, I endeavored to apply the principles of hermeneutics that I had been taught at the seminary, as well as my training as a lawyer. Above all, I prayerfully sought the guidance of the Holy Spirit. I would like to share some of the evidence I examined and conclusions I reached.

## A Creative Command

An attorney or judge must start with the law itself. The Sabbath is the fourth of the Ten Com-

mandments, recorded in Exodus 20 and elsewhere in the Bible. The fourth commandment mandates: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work. . . . For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and made it holy" (Exodus 20:8-11, NASB).\*

The Sabbath, as the statute shows, honors God's Creation work. Its legislative history dates to Creation: "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it" (Genesis 2:2, 3).

To sanctify means to set apart for holy use. Of the seven days in the earth's first week, only the seventh was designated by God in this way. He rested on this day, blessed it, and made it holy. But does it really matter whether we follow His command? The apostle John said yes and directly linked our love of God with our obedience to Him: "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments" (1 John 5:3). And Jesus proclaimed that the greatest of the commandments is "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment" (Mark 12:30).

It should be noted parenthetically that God designated the seventh day, not any other day of the week. He rested on the seventh day, blessed it, and made it holy. Human logic might indeed lead us to feel that a particular day should not be critical; yet the simple answer is that God commanded us to observe the Sabbath, and we should show our love for Him by obedience.

As a Christian I find it significant that the Person of the Holy Trinity who gave mankind the Sabbath at Creation is Christ Himself. The New Testament emphasizes that "all things were created by him [Christ], and for him" (Colossians 1:16; cf. John 1:3; Hebrews 1:2). Jesus confirmed that He is "Lord . . . of the sabbath" (Mark 2:28). It is tragic that many Christians do not understand Christ's role in the Creation and in the Old Testament, nor that the Old Testament was the foundation of the New Testament and was affirmed by Jesus in His teachings (see, for example, Matthew 5:17; 22:40; Luke 24:45).

### An Expanded Understanding

One doesn't need to be an attorney to know that laws can change. Legislatures not only change laws

but even abolish them. Judges may declare them unconstitutional. What about the Ten Commandments? Did Jesus change or abolish any of them, as some would argue? To the contrary, near the beginning of His sermon on the mount, Jesus said:

"Do not suppose that I came to annul the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to abolish but to complete them; for I assure you, while heaven and earth endure not one iota or one projection of a letter will be dropped from the Law until all is accomplished. Whoever, therefore, abolishes the least significant of these commands and so teaches the people, he shall be of least significance in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever shall observe and teach them shall be prominent in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not at all enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:17-20, MLB).+

How can this emphatic affirmation be read other than that it is essential to our right relationship with God to observe the commandments just as Jesus did: "I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love" (John 15:10)? More specifically, the apostles confirmed that it was Christ's practice to observe the Sabbath (Luke 4:16; see also Luke 13:15; Matthew 12:12; Mark 2:23-27). And John taught that "one who claims to remain in Him ought himself to live the way He lived" (1 John 2:6, MLB).

When Jesus said He had come to "complete" the law, He used the Greek word *plerosai*, which means to "make full," "fulfill," "bring to completion," "make fully known," "proclaim fully." In the following verses (Matthew 5:21-32) Jesus enhanced our understanding of the two commandments concerning murder and adultery. He explained that everyone who is even angry with his brother is guilty of murder. He added that anyone who even looks lustfully at a woman has committed adultery. Similarly He expanded our understanding of the Sabbath commandment, explaining that it is lawful to heal and do good in other ways on the Sabbath (see Matthew 12:10-13). Far from abrogating the commandments, Jesus clarified their scope, thus fulfilling this prophecy of Isaiah: "He will magnify the law, and make it honourable" (Isaiah 42:21). Under His new covenant with us, the Lord said that His laws would be written upon in heart (Hebrews 8:8, 10).

"Till heaven and earth pass away," Jesus said, the commandments will not change (Matthew 5:18, RSV).++ And in "the new heavens and the new earth," the prophet Isaiah revealed, "it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to

**Human  
logic might  
indeed lead  
us to feel  
that a  
particular  
day should  
not be  
critical; yet  
the simple  
answer is  
that God  
commanded  
us to observe  
the Sabbath,  
and we  
should show  
our love for  
Him by  
obedience.**

worship before me, saith the Lord” (Isaiah 66:22, 23).

“All flesh,” the Lord emphasized. “Also the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord, to minister to Him, and to love the name of the Lord, . . . every one who keeps from profaning the sabbath, and holds fast My covenant; even those I will bring to My holy mountain” (Isaiah 56:6, 7, NASB).

But we will not get to the holy mountain because we keep the Sabbath or any other of the commandments. We will get there because Jesus kept them perfectly for us. God sent His own Son in a human body to pay our penalty for lawbreaking. He did so because the law could not be abrogated. It is at the cross, then, that we see the importance Heaven attaches to the “holy, and just, and good” law (Romans 7:12).

Jesus, who came to earth in the vulnerable form of a human body and was subsequently anointed with the Holy Spirit, showed us how the law can be obeyed and fulfilled (see Acts 10:38). Paul explained: “We aren’t saved from sin’s grasp by knowing the commandments of God, because we can’t and don’t keep them, but God put into effect a different plan to save us. He sent his own Son in a human body . . . and destroyed sin’s control over us by giving himself as a sacrifice for our sins. So now we can obey God’s laws if we follow after the Holy Spirit and no longer obey the old evil nature within us” (Romans 8:3, 4, TLB).\*\*

#### Lawful to Do Good

It is sometimes erroneously said that Jesus never mentioned the Sabbath commandment. More accurately, it can be said that He never disputed the continued existence of the Sabbath, nor the day on which it was to be observed. That the Sabbath was the seventh day was a given. The only issue in the New Testament is how the Sabbath should be observed. On that matter, Christ had much to say. Therefore, He must have intended that we continue to observe it properly.

His emphasis on proper Sabbath observance was a significant factor in His persecution. “And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him” (Luke 6:7). When they did, they conspired with the Herodians to destroy him (Mark 3:4-6). The Pharisees concluded that He was not from God because He didn’t keep the Sabbath (John 9:16) according to their rules. How ironic and tragic that most Christians no longer keep the Sabbath, despite what Christ suffered in teaching us how to observe it!

Still, some believe that after His crucifixion Jesus

**We will  
not get to the  
holy mountain  
because we  
keep the  
Sabbath or any  
other of the  
commandments.  
We will get  
there because  
Jesus kept  
them perfectly  
for us.**

changed the Sabbath from the seventh day to the first day. But His first “act” after His crucifixion on Friday was to rest in the tomb over the Sabbath or, depending on your interpretation of Peter’s message, to preach to the dead in prison (see 1 Peter 3:19; 4:6, NASB). He arose on Sunday, the first day of the week (see Luke 23:50-56; 24:1-9). Did He then instruct us to celebrate His resurrection by worshiping on Sunday? Nowhere does the New Testament record such a command. Rather, Paul tells us that baptism is the New Testament memorial of Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection (see Romans 6). Jesus taught explicitly that we should remember Him until His return by participating in Communion (1 Corinthians 11:23-26). So we see that Jesus did prescribe a new way of remembering Him, but never prescribed a new day for worshiping Him.

#### The Unalterable Covenant

In the context of Christ’s death mention should be made of His new covenant, which can be likened to a will. A will can be changed only while the testator—the one who made it—lives. His death seals its provisions and validates them. One acquainted with law cannot ignore this fact. Paul, who also had legal training, explains: “As in the case of a will, the agreement [covenant] is only valid after death. While the testator lives, a will has no legal power. And indeed we find that even the first agreement [covenant] of God’s will was not put into force without the shedding of blood” (Hebrews 9:16-18, Phillips).§

What is the meaning of this rule of law? First, that Sunday worship would have had to be put into the new covenant before Christ’s death, and no such evidence exists. Once ratified by His blood, the covenant could not be altered. While subsequent revelations may have clarified it, no man could rightly claim authority to change it after it was ratified by the death of Christ at Calvary! (See Galatians 3:15; John 16:13, 14.)

After His death Jesus did open His disciples’ minds to “understand the scriptures” (Luke 24:45). But one searches the Scriptures in vain for anything so critical as His abolishing the Sabbath or changing it to another day.

In fact, before the events of the Crucifixion weekend, Jesus, looking through the years to the end-time, directed His followers to pray that they might not have to flee before hostile armies “in the winter, neither on the sabbath day” (Matthew 24:20).

We are directed in Christ’s Great Commission, like a mandatory injunction under our law, to “go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptiz-

ing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age" (Matthew 28:19, 20, RSV).

What commands of Jesus regarding the Sabbath should we teach others to observe? His commands included His teachings on how we should observe the Sabbath—that it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath, that He is the Lord of the Sabbath, and that the Sabbath is made for us. On the other hand, His commands included nothing about changing or discarding the Sabbath. In carrying out the Great Commission, we are to observe what Jesus commanded rather than the later traditions of Sunday observance by various churches.

### The Unanswerable Evidence

After Christ's crucifixion, the apostles continued to observe the Sabbath, even in the company of Gentiles, as well as with Jewish Christians (see Acts 13:42-44; 16:13; 18:4). James the brother of Jesus, in addressing the Jerusalem Council of the Christian church, noted that Moses was read to Christians in the synagogues every Sabbath (Acts 15:21).

Further, the apostles taught Christian converts to obey the commandments—including the Sabbath commandment. "What matters," said Paul, "is the keeping of the commandments of God" (1 Corinthians 7:19, NASB). John explained that to love God means to obey Him: "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (1 John 5:3). Looking to the disciples who would be counted faithful in the days just before Christ's return, John said approvingly: "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus" (Revelation 14:12). The book of Revelation and the First Letter of John are commonly accepted as being the final writings of the New Testament.

In the face of the compelling evidence that Christ intended His followers to continue their practice of worshiping on the seventh-day Sabbath, why, then, do the vast majority of Christians today choose to worship on Sunday, the first day of the week?

### Sunday Worship

Evidence suggests the tradition of Sunday worship originated after A.D. 100, following the death of the apostles, and that for several centuries many churches worshiped on both the Sabbath and Sunday, the latter in commemoration of the Resurrection.

A number of Christians may have given up worshiping on the Sabbath because they did not

**Evidence suggests the tradition of Sunday worship originated after A.D. 100, following the death of the apostles, and that for several centuries many churches worshiped on both the Sabbath and Sunday.**

wish to be identified with the Jews, particularly after A.D. 135, when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and prohibited worship on the Sabbath. Controversy developing between Christians and Jews may have contributed also. Further, in the same era, the Roman Church led a movement requiring that the resurrection of Christ (Easter) be commemorated annually on the Sunday following Passover, rather than in accordance with the Jewish calendar, which had set Passover on Nisan 15 irrespective of what day it fell on. This requirement added significance to Sunday worship. In A.D. 321 the Roman emperor Constantine, after declaring his conversion from sun worship to Christianity, ordered all subjects except farmers to rest "on the venerable day of the sun." And the church adopted December 25, when the sun worshipers celebrated the birth of the new sun, as the day to celebrate the birth of Christ.

### Contrary to Evidence

A few churches believe that the Sabbath is no longer to be observed because the Ten Commandments were, they believe, superseded. Though this may be the most consistent reason for changing from worship on the Sabbath to Sunday, it is contrary to the evidence of the foregoing Scriptures.

So also is belief that the Sabbath was made only for Jews. The evidence against this position is overwhelming: (1) the Sabbath, as we have seen, was established at the end of Creation week, long before the nation of Israel appeared in history (Genesis 2:2, 3); (2) God's laws, including the Sabbath, were observed by His people before the birth of the nation of Israel and the proclamation of the Ten Commandments (Genesis 26:5; Exodus 16:28-30); (3) Isaiah said that salvation would be available to all, including foreigners, who did not profane the Sabbath and who held fast His covenant (Isaiah 56:6, 7); (4) the teachings of Jesus, already cited; (5) Jesus' assertion that the Sabbath was made, not just for the Jew, but for "man" (Mark 2:27); (6) the assurance in Hebrews that the Sabbath rest remains for the people of God (Hebrews 4:9, NASB).

Some argue that it is impossible to observe the correct day for the Sabbath because at some time prior to the birth of Jesus the Jewish calendar was lost. Can we seriously suppose that a whole nation of Sabbathkeepers awakened one morning not knowing what day it was? In any event, Jesus had no trouble identifying the Sabbath that He had set aside at Creation and of which He declared Himself Lord; and there is no doubt about the calendar (both Jewish and Roman) identifying the seventh-day Sabbath, which He observed and confirmed.

Some Christians assert the superiority of Sun-

day over the Sabbath on the basis of Christ's resurrection, which they deem more important than Creation. Yet it was Christ, the Creator, who designated the seventh-day Sabbath and set it apart for holy use. This reason for Sundaykeeping actually enhances the contention of the evolutionists, who deny the role of the Creator.

Were the early Christian churches that changed their day of worship to Sunday infallible? Or can one document other errors in their worship practices? The latter question must be answered in the affirmative, or there would not have been a Protestant Reformation or a Catholic Counter-Reformation. Even during the lives of the apostles the church fell victim to many errors, as reflected by Paul's letters to various churches, such as the one at Corinth, as well as by John's letters to the seven churches in the second and third chapters of the book of Revelation.

### Traditions of Men

I asked a number of ministers who worship on Sunday which day they would worship on if they relied strictly on Scripture and not in any way on church tradition. Most responded that they would necessarily have to choose the seventh-day Sabbath. Jesus once spoke to religious leaders of His day of the necessary consequence of choosing tradition over His Word: "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men. . . . Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition" (Mark 7:7-9).

When tempted by Satan in the wilderness, Jesus turned to Scripture for support (Luke 4:1-13). "All scripture," wrote Paul to Timothy, "is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16, RSV). While Scripture is inspired, church traditions may not be. Accordingly, we should be like the Bereans, who "received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so" (Acts 17:11, NASB).

### My Decision


I found "these things" to be so: the evidence for continued observance of the seventh-day Sabbath is scriptural and persuasive. For me the compelling evidence is the testimony of Jesus that He did not come to abolish the law, but to magnify its spiritual dimensions. Surely He did so in respect to the Sabbath by exposing and denouncing the manmade restrictions the Jewish religious leaders had added to it, and emphasizing that He at Cre-

**The evidence  
for continued  
observance  
of the  
seventh-day  
Sabbath is  
scriptural and  
persuasive.  
For me the  
compelling  
evidence is  
the testimony  
of Jesus that  
He did not  
come to  
abolish the  
law, but to  
magnify its  
spiritual  
dimensions.**

ation had made the Sabbath for man, not man for the Sabbath. Having examined the evidence, I knew that if I love the Father and Son, I should keep Their commandments (1 John 5:3; 1 Corinthians 7:19; Revelation 14:12; John 14:15). So I now observe the Sabbath on the seventh day, as it was in the beginning when the Creator sanctified that day, and as Christ proclaimed it will be in the end just before His second coming (Genesis 2:2, 3; see also Exodus 20:8; Matthew 24:20). Let each person examine Scripture for himself until he is "fully convinced in his own mind" (Romans 14:5, RSV).

Finally, Scripture gives us the glorious promise that "there remains a sabbath rest for the people of God; for whoever enters God's rest also ceases from his labors as God did from his. Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, that no one fall by . . . disobedience" (Hebrews 4:9-11, RSV).

How can we strive and be obedient in preparing for the eternal Sabbath, as urged by Scripture, if we fail to observe God's commands, which include the weekly Sabbath? In observing the weekly Sabbath, we are blessed with the assurance that we are saved by His grace, and not by our efforts (Ephesians 2:8, 9). We are instructed that "whoever enters God's rest also ceases from his labors as God did from his" (Hebrews 4:10, RSV). How did God cease from His labors? We are reminded just six verses earlier that "God rested on the seventh day from all his works" (verse 4, RSV).

That is why I rest on the seventh day, just as the Lord did at Creation and when He walked among us in human flesh. 

---

\*Scripture quotations marked NASB are from the *New American Standard Bible*, copyright The Lockman Foundation 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977.

\*\*Texts credited to MLB are from *The Modern Language Bible: The New Berkeley Version in Modern English*. Copyright 1945, 1959, 1969 by Zondervan Publishing House. Used by permission.

\*\*Bible texts credited to RSV are from the *Revised Standard Version of the Bible*, copyright 1946, 1952, 1971, by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Used by permission.

\*\*Verses marked TLB are taken from *The Living Bible*, copyright 1971 by Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, Ill. Used by permission.

§Bible texts credited to Phillips are from J. B. Phillips: *The New Testament in Modern English*, Revised Edition. Copyright J. B. Phillips 1958, 1960, 1972. Used by permission of Macmillan Publishing Co.

All other Scripture references are from the King James Version.

BY  
CALUDIO  
CONSEGUERA

B

Reprinted  
with  
permission  
from  
Shabbat  
Shalom.

**N**ight, in the Dark Ages. Abram and Deborah Benjamin huddle in a dark corner of their house. Deborah shivers in her husband's arms.

Outside the barks of the mob intensify. The house is surrounded. Torchlight enters through a crack along the door, and shadows quiver on the wall behind them. Deborah's tears dampen Abram's neck.

A loud, rude pounding hits the door. Abram and Deborah shiver in each other's grasp.

"Open up! Open up!"

The pounding is harder, the house vibrates, and the door, kicked off the wall, crashes. The room floods with light as men draped in shadows rush in, smashing tables and chairs. They race toward the husband and wife, wrench the couple apart and drag them outside. Torches bath the street in flickering light.

Before the mob stands Father DeBriers. Next to him, bent under a giant cross upon his shoulders, is

Five minutes later, with large stones tied around their necks, Abram and Deborah are hurled into the river while the man with the cross continues singing hymns to Jesus.

### The Veneration Of Mary

Deborah's and Abram's fate was common in Medieval Europe. Many Jews who refused to be baptized were killed—generally by drowning—usually at the instigation of the church.

Yet, by refusing to accept the faith of their persecutors, these Jews died closer to the teaching of the Bible, including the New Testament, than they would have had they accepted Medieval Christianity!

Had Deborah and Abram been baptized, they would have had to venerate Mary, "the Mother of God." The Roman Catholic Church taught that Mary was conceived without sin through the "immaculate conception," which made her super-human. This adoration is reflected in the "Hail Mary" prayer, which says, "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our

## BETTER OFF DEAD!

a man singing a hymn to Jesus. The mob is unruly, shouting, cursing. Father DeBriers raises his hand and the crowd quietyens. The man under the cross still sings.

"Abram and Deborah Benjamin," the priest announces. "We have suffered your presence in our midst long enough. We have shown you the texts of the Bible, we have read to you the words of Moses, your own prophet. We have admonished you in Christian love. Do you persist in refusing to be baptized?"

His arms bent behind his back by two men, Abram glances at Deborah, thrown on the ground, a slash of black hair hanging over her cheek. Though fear and pain rise from her, and a tear glistens in the torchlight, he sees that she has not changed her mind. He turns to Father DeBriers and says defiantly, "We refuse."

The priest's face contorts, the mob screams, and Abram is thrown down and kicked. Father DeBriers points in the direction of the bridge. "Take them!" he shouts.

death. Amen." At the Council of Ephesus (C.E. 431), both this prayer and Mary's role as heavenly queen, spiritual mother, and intercessor between God and man emerged.

Yet the Jews knew that Michael, not Mary, is the intercessor in heaven.

In the 1400s, Franciscan St. Bernadine of Siena summarized the teaching on Mary: "I do not hesitate to say that she [Mary] has received a certain jurisdiction over all graces. . . . They are administered through her hands to whom she pleases, when she pleases, and as much as she pleases."

Perhaps, when Father DeBriers and others tried to convince Abram and Deborah to accept their religion and venerate Mary, the two remembered the words of Moses, repeated centuries later by Jesus: "The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment" (Mark 12:29, 30).

For a Jew who believed that God alone should be

worshiped, the veneration of Mary was blasphemy, no different from the worship of Isis, Horus, Istar, or Tammuz. Mary's veneration was an attempt by the early church to accommodate Christianity to the heathens, who, since ancient Babylon had been nurtured on the concept of a "great mother" goddess. But what brought the heathens in, kept the Jews out.

It was not easy for the Jews to distinguish between pagan idolatry and Medieval Christianity's image worship and veneration of saints. By the Protestant Reformation, Frederick the Wise, the elector of Saxony, had a collection of more than 5,000 relics, including "one tooth of St. Jerome, four pieces of St. Chrysostom, six pieces of St. Bernard, and four pieces of St. Augustine." His collection supposedly included four hairs of Mary, three pieces of her cloak, and four pieces of her girdle. Among the relics of Jesus were allegedly a piece of His swaddling cloth, 13 pieces of His crib, a wisp of straw from His manger, a gold coin brought by the wise men, a strand of Jesus's beard, a thorn from the crown He wore on the cross, one of the nails driven into His hands, and even a twig from Moses's burning bush. Paying to see or touch any of these relics guaranteed the person a shorter stay in purgatory.

Other relics in churches throughout Europe included bread that Christ used at the Lord's Supper, milk from the Virgin Mary, the parings of St. Edmund's toenails, a bone from Mary Magdalene, and the spearhead that pierced the side of Jesus.

So prevalent was idol and image worship that the church eradicated the second commandment which forbade idolatry: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them. . . ." (Exodus 20:4, 5).

For Abram and Deborah to have accepted Medieval Christianity and its veneration of saints and relics would have been the basest apostasy—a mockery of the Ten Commandments, the most sacred precepts in their religion. And Jesus would have agreed: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the

least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:17-19).

Had Abram and Deborah accepted Christianity, they would have abandoned not only the second commandment but the fourth as well—the sacred command to keep holy the seventh day. Instead of the Shabbat of Adam, Abraham, Moses, David, even Jesus, they would have started to keep holy a pagan holiday, a day honoring a Roman sun god. The history of the origin of Sunday as the Christian day of rest reveals that early Christians gradually adopted Sunday, separating themselves from the Jews.


Had Deborah and Abram been baptized, they would have had to believe that the priest could turn a piece of bread into the body of Christ, and no Jew could accept that belief without sacrificing the simplest truths of the Bible.

Had Deborah and Abram consented to the demands of the church, they would have agreed to adopt a whole litany of paganism. Even Catholic convert Cardinal Newman admits: "Temples, incense, oil lamps, votive offerings, holy water, holidays and seasons of devotion, processions, and blessing of fields, sacerdotal garments, the tonsure (of priests, monks, and nuns), images . . . are all of pagan origin."

By rejecting these teachings, Abram and Deborah, and thousands of other Jews, died closer to the religion of Jesus and Paul than they would have had they become Catholics!

Things are different now. Jews are presented with many Christian religions. Yet the pickings are still slim. Though Protestant churches have shed the worship of Mary and the veneration of relics, most still offer Jews the same pagan sabbath day, Sunday, that Father DeBriers offered Abram and Deborah. And though not quite as important, most Protestant churches offer the Jews Easter and Christmas, two pagan holidays—Easter named after Ishtar, the Babylonian goddess of fertility (bunny rabbits and eggs, though not connected with the resurrection of Christ, are found in the ancient fertility rites of Babylon), and Christmas, celebrating the "birth of the Sun," is the biggest pagan holiday of the year.

Today a Jew who embraces Christianity can find a church that believes much the way Jews do on the above issues.

But what about Abram and Deborah? Perhaps, they were better off dead. 

**LIBERTY**  
55 WEST OAK RIDGE DRIVE  
HAGERSTOWN, MARYLAND 21740

**ADDRESS CORRECTION  
REQUESTED**

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE

**PAID**

HAGERSTOWN, MD.  
PERMIT NO. 45

A RIGHT  
IS A  
TERRIBLE  
THING TO  
WASTE



LIBERTY

LIBERTY MAGAZINE ♦ EIGHTY-SEVEN YEARS OF VIGILANCE