

SIGNPOSTS

ARNEW-SFB-7-5-22

A DIGEST OF RESEARCHED INFORMATION FOR CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

CHRISTIANS, WAKE UP! YOUR VALUES ARE BEING DESTROYED!

South Africa is being moved rapidly into a post Christian society. This is being done by breaking down all the moral values which have been built into our way of life over the course of hundreds of years.

Pornography used to be tightly controlled in South Africa. Now, with hardly any control at all, our land is being flooded with hardcore pornography in the form of videos, films, television, magazines and books. Perhaps the most pernicious form is that available on 087 telephone numbers. Explicit, provocative and enticing advertisements for this service, some under the guise of sex education or medical advice, fill our newspapers. Worst of all, telephone pornography is open to children whose sexual awareness is just awakening. Their curiosity is being exploited for financial gain and their innocence is being corrupted.

Along with this rise in pornography, prostitution has raised its ugly head. "Massage parlours", little more than fronts for brothels, flourish because no action is taken against them. But they are not the only place prostitutes operate. Foreign visitors staying in 5-star hotels complain that they are being solicited in their rooms on the basis of information supplied to the prostitutes.

In the two and a half years that capital punishment has been suspended, some 30 000 innocent people have been brutally and tragically murdered. If there were no murders, the debate about the death penalty would be a non issue. But until murder can be eliminated, capital punishment must remain a reality.

Gambling was legalised when casinos were opened in the national states. Now that the reincorporation of these states into South Africa is being contemplated, casino type establishments are springing up all over. There is also pressure to have a state lottery legalised.

Cinemas were opened in four major centres on Sundays for the first time on April 5. Could this be a prelude to the total commercialisation of the Lord's Day? Great pressure is being generated to have abortion on demand legalised in South Africa. This could happen in the near future.

WHY THE DEAFENING SILENCE?

Past generations of Christians have seen all of the above as evils and have campaigned vigorously to have them

outlawed. They argued that prostitution degrades women, that pornography inflames passions and leads to rape and the sexual abuse of women and children. They maintained, on the basis of Genesis 9:6, that human life is sacred and needs to be fully protected. Human life begins at conception and abortion breaks the Sixth Commandment - "Thou shalt not kill". Abortion cheapens human life and leads to child abuse as well as demands for the termination of the life of the infirm and elderly.

Why then, after past generations of Christians have struggled so long to have laws passed to protect society from these evils, is the present generation of Christians so silent now that these evils are flooding back? Is it because they are asleep? Do they believe that by retreating into mental and spiritual monasteries, they can protect themselves and their families from the evil that is engulfing the world? Have they forgotten that the Lord Jesus commissioned them to act as salt and light in a dying world?

The only Christian leader who has publicly spoken out against the legalisation of these evils has been Commissioner Roy Olkers of the Salvation Army. In letters to newspapers he said: "Gambling weakens a man's will to work for his own betterment. It destroys incentive and fosters illusionary dreams of idle riches." The poor find lotteries on their street corners irresistible. These facts were freely acknowledged by Christian leaders in the past.

One would have thought the opening of cinemas on Sundays would have brought some reaction from Christian leaders. But they were silent. Surely they should have pointed out that this breaks the Fourth Commandment (Exodus 20:8-11). Jesus stressed the benefits of this wise law (Mark 2:27). Workers need one day of the week for worship, rest and to be with their families. For this to happen, all commercial activities, including entertainment, should cease on the same day (apart from the minimum of essential services). If the distinction between Sunday and the other days of the week is broken down, the situation will undoubtedly arise where a company insists that all



1. Like so many South African Christians, Leroy the frog has had a comfortable life for so long that he has forgotten to be alert and watchful (Mat 26:41) . . .

employees work on Sunday on a shift basis. Christians who refuse would be discriminated against and face possible dismissal.

The very foundations of the practical application of the Christian faith in everyday life are being actively undermined and Christians are passively accepting it!

DIFFERENT ROLES FOR CHURCH AND STATE

"We want a secular state where no religion has an unfair advantage over other religions because it invokes the power of the State," said Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu on SATV's *Agenda* programme on April 19, typifying the level of Church support for a secular state. "Believers must make their faith attractive by the kind of people they are," added the high profile church leader.

The concerted campaign to move South Africa from its Christian foundation onto a secular state is forcing Christians to carefully think through the different roles the Bible allocates for the Church and the State. Because they have believed passages like Mat 22:21; I Sam 13:9-14; II Chron 26:16-21, countries with a majority of Bible-believing Christians have accepted that the role of the State and the Church are not the same.

Because Jesus did not interfere with the freedom of the individual to accept or reject His message by imposing His will on him (see for example, Mark 10:17-22), Bible-believing Christians do not use the power of the State to impose their faith on others. On the contrary, they pioneered the concept of religious tolerance which, to this day, is practiced in only a minority of countries. They believe they must present the message of the Gospel as powerfully, prayerfully and winsomely as possible and leave the results to God and the conscience of the individual.

The role the Bible allocates to the Church is to reconcile sinful men and women to the Holy God. It must warn them that there is a Heaven to be gained and a Hell to be shunned. They must be told that their sin separates them from God and there is nothing they can do to make themselves acceptable to Him. The good news is that God, through the death of His unique Son, Jesus Christ, has cancelled the penalty for their sins. All they need do is to repent of their sins, turn from them and put their faith in Christ's atoning blood. They are then born again of God's Spirit and become sons of God. His Spirit starts to live in them and they begin to do God's will which is now written on their hearts. During the rest of their time on earth, the Church leads them into a greater understanding of the Christian message and how it can be lived out practically. This involves taking responsibility for their own lives (Eph 4:28), establishing stable families (Eph 5:22-6:4), being responsible employers and employees (Eph 6:5-9) and helping the poor and needy (Acts 9:39, I Tim 5:9). At death, the believers go directly into the presence of the Lord. For this reason, the Biblical symbol of the Church's authority is the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven (Mat 16:19).

THE ROLE OF THE STATE

The State has a very different role, which is represented by the sword, the Biblical symbol of its authority (Rom 13:4). Its prime role is to protect its citizens by punishing evildoers. A secondary role is to reward its honest citizens (Rom 13:3-4). The State cannot proclaim the message of grace or lead people to salvation.

The Bible teaches that despite the best efforts of the Church,

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. Gal 6:7-8

Speaking of Israel's priests who could not distinguish between the holy things and the unholy, God said, "I sought for a man among them who would make a wall and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one" (Ezekiel 22:30). Will the Lord look in vain for someone to stand against the evil flooding into South Africa?

many people will harden their hearts to its message. The State must therefore restrain the sin in their hearts (Mark 7:21-23) to prevent the moral disintegration of society (Gen 6:5) and the spread of anarchy (Judges 17:6) by enforcing certain laws. To protect women and innocent children, it must pass and enforce strict laws on those issues which inflame and exploit man's evil nature for commercial gain. These include pornography, prostitution, gambling and sexual perversions such as homosexuality, lesbianism, bestiality and the sexual abuse of children.

The Bible makes it clear that human life is precious because people are made in God's image (Gen 9:6; Ex 21:29). The State therefore has the responsibility to protect human life by executing murderers after a fair trial. When the State fails in its God-given task, human life is cheapened and murders increase. Because South Africa has ignored this command, the murder rate has increased dramatically. South Africans are no longer safe, even in broad daylight, on the streets, in trains and in their own homes. Many of the murder victims are the weaker members of society, the elderly, children and women on their own.

The State must set up an unbiased judicial system which is capable of acting fairly (Lev 19:15) and quickly (Eccles 8:11). In South Africa, it often takes years after a suspect is arrested for him to be sentenced. Because justice is delayed, crime increases.

The Church cannot fulfil any of the above functions for they belong to the State. On the other hand, the State cannot make bad people good. That is the responsibility of the Church. When the State tries to rehabilitate criminals, it is encroaching on the area of responsibility of the Church. The State's function is limited to punishing them.

It can be argued that the above description of the function of the State is a Christian one and therefore should be rejected in a pluralistic society. That argument is invalid for two reasons. Firstly, while South Africa is undoubtedly a pluralist society racially, the vast majority of South Africans identify themselves as Christians. While it is true that only a small proportion of those would be born-again Christians, most would desire God's blessing on their individual lives and on their nation. Moreover it is unlikely that the majority of Jews and Muslims would have strenuous objections to the principles outlined above.

Secondly, if the Biblical model of government is rejected, which model should be put in its place? The Hindu one? The Muslim one? The Jewish one? For underlying every government there has to be a religion, ideology or coherent worldview.

In reality, the ideology which is replacing Christian principles in South Africa is secular (or atheistic) humanism. This teaches that there is no God (except as he exists in man's imagination)

and there are no absolute standards of right or wrong. Man is inherently good and is able to set his own moral standards which can vary from individual to individual, from year to year and from place to place. What is right or wrong is determined by 51 percent of the population at any given time.

Moreover humanism believes in evolution, that people are the product of their environment. Therefore, by manipulating their environment, people can be conditioned to think and act in a certain way. Some have evolved further than others. They are therefore destined to rule. Humanism favours a socialist state with wide powers to intervene in practically every area of the life of its citizens. It becomes involved in industry, restricts freedom of movement and practises large-scale social engineering.

ARE CHRISTIAN VALUES REALLY IMPORTANT?

Of course, they are! Remember that God has established an unchanging rule - "Whatever a man sows, that he will also reap" (Gal 6:7). The verse goes on to explain that "he who sows to his flesh ... will reap corruption but he who sows to the Spirit will ... reap everlasting life". Crops take many months to reach maturity, some even years. The man who has no time for God may prosper for a while but the harvest he will reap in due course is certain! What is true of the individual is also true of the nation.

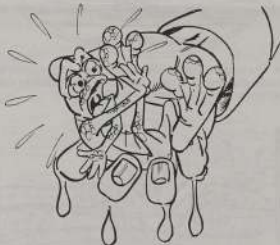
The Bible repeatedly states that God is the Sovereign Ruler of heaven and earth (eg Ps 24:1; 47:2, 8). God's dealing with the Gentile kings in the book of Daniel illustrates this fact. Nebuchadnezzar was forced to acknowledge "that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses" (Dan 5:25, 35). Belshazzar was dethroned when his rule was weighed and found wanting (Dan 5:26-27).

A nation which turns its back on God will not prosper. Indeed when a society as a whole loses the consensus that there is a God who rewards the good both in this life and the next, and punishes the wicked, it suffers a grievous loss and has nothing to put in its place. The only motivation for the majority of people would be self-gratification in the present life. There would be no reason to inconvenience one's self to help others unless it brings the praise of men. There would be no reason to avoid dishonesty except to avoid the condemnation of men and punishment in this life. If a person were to decide that the chances were small that a criminal action would be exposed while the financial or sensual benefits flowing from that act were great, he would not hesitate to commit that act, even to the extent of murder. When God is removed from public life, society is shifted from being God-centred to being man-centred. The individual and the "me" philosophy become the focus, ignoring the needs of others.

Much of the violence, crime and corruption presently tearing South Africa apart can be traced back directly to the loss, among a growing section of its population, of the knowledge that

Humanism is contrary to God's will because it places too much power in the hands of a few which encourages all kinds of corruption. As Lord Acton said: "Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely." God's pattern decentralises power by putting responsibilities on the individual, the family and the Church.

Because humanism is centred on man, it is very hostile to Biblical Christianity. It therefore seeks to remove every Christian value in society. Once this is done, Christians will find growing restriction on their witness and worship. This process has already reached a very advanced stage in South Africa. Unless Christians wake up and take a stand now, they will within a matter of years, face persecution at a level unprecedented in South African history.



there is a God Who punishes wickedness and rewards righteousness.

Conversely, when the general aim of the majority of the people is to please God, they will help others even when it is to their own loss and, if necessary, at the risk of their own lives. Moreover, they will avoid dishonest actions, even when the possibility of being caught and punished is remote, because they are conscious that they will have to give an account of those wrong deeds to the all-knowing God.

It is therefore necessary to keep the knowledge of God constantly before the general public. It is especially important that Bible-based instruction is given in schools so that the young can be informed that God rewards good and noble acts and punishes those that are evil and selfish. The rising generation must be instructed in the moral code of the Bible as summarised in the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount.

John Adams, an early American president, recognised this: "Our government is only capable of controlling human passions when they are restrained by morality and religion. Our constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate for governing any other." Noah Webster (of Webster Dictionary fame) agreed. "The moral principles and precepts contained in the Scriptures ought to form the basis of all our civil constitutions and laws. All the miseries and evils which men suffer from, vice, crime, ambition, injustice, oppression, slavery and war, proceed from their despising or neglecting the precepts contained in the Bible."

These statements adequately sum up South Africa's problem.



2. Leroy's carefree life comes to a sudden end and...
3. ... he is dumped into a totally new environment. Similarly, Christians in the new South Africa are finding Biblical values being rapidly discarded.

Our country is becoming ungovernable because we have forgotten that we are accountable to God. The Bible makes it clear that the reason their "mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace they have not known" is because "there is no fear of God before their eyes" (Rom 3:14-18). The central reason for the sky-rocketing crime rate, the great increase in the number of murders and the appalling level of political violence is because people have forgotten God! Poverty, oppression and unemployment are only peripheral reasons. Therefore socio-economic upliftment programmes will not bring about a major improvement because they fail to address the fundamental problem!

Not only is the fear of the Lord the beginning of wisdom (Ps 111:10), it is also the beginning of social stability because "by the fear of the Lord one departs from evil" (Prov 16:6). If God, the Judge, is ignored, there is no other way to persuade people to turn from doing evil except the certainty of detection by the police and punishment by earthly courts of law.

WHAT HAPPENED WHEN AMERICA TURNED FROM GOD

The terrible consequences of a nation turning from God are graphically detailed in the book *America: To Pray or Not to Pray?* by David Barton. In 1962-3, the US Supreme Court prohibited prayer in public schools across America. The impact on the children, their families, the education system and the country was horrifying. From that date, a distinct and well-defined new trend of uninterrupted moral and academic decay was established. Only after the opening of a significant number of private Christian schools, which put the Bible and prayer back into education, did the new trend begin to be reversed.

The decline in moral standards as a result of American children being deprived of prayer was dramatic. Premarital sexual activity increased by over 200 percent, pregnancies to unwed mothers by almost 400 percent; gonorrhea by over 200 percent and the number of suicides by over 400 percent! In 1960 only 10 percent of teenage girls were sexually active. By 1987, the figure was 50 percent. Between 1963 and 1983, the number of babies born to unwed teenagers rose by 500 percent.

The impact on the nation itself of children being ordered to stop praying in school was as serious. Prior to 1962, crime, alcohol abuse, productivity and national morality, as measured by sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), had been stable or improving. Since prayer was prohibited from student life, the rate of violent crime has risen by over 500 percent, per capita alcohol consumption has increased by 35 percent; national productivity has dropped by over 80 percent and STDs are up by nearly 200

percent. In addition, new problems, including child abuse, corruption among public officials, drugs, Aids and illiteracy, have arisen in America.

Before prayer was banned from schools in 1963, every generation of Americans outstripped their parents in education, literacy and economic achievements. Since that tragic event and for the first time in American history, the educational skills of the present generation is not even approaching that of their parents.

SOUTH AFRICA HAS NO EXCUSE!

South Africans need to weigh these alarming statistics very seriously. In 1963, America banned God from the schools and reaped a terrible harvest. Perhaps we can forgive the Americans because they did not realise how great the consequences would be.

South Africa is systematically scrapping every Biblical value from society. As a result, the already high crime rate will climb still further. The moral decline will accelerate rapidly. But South Africans will not have the excuse of the Americans. They will not be able to say they didn't know what the consequences would be! The American example is staring them in the face!

When prayer was excluded from American schools, 97 percent of all Americans said they believed in God! Why was there no immediate outcry? Because American Christians were asleep! They said it didn't matter if prayer and the Bible were taken out of school. They would teach their children at home. They believed that it did not matter what the politicians and the judges did. That was the world and Christians shouldn't get involved in those things. They believed the world was getting worse and worse, indicating that the Second Coming was very close and that Jesus would soon remove them from the whole mess.

Over three-quarters of all South Africans identify themselves as

Christians. Why were they looking the other way when previously banned pornographic literature began flooding the country? Why the deafening silence when erotic sex, gambling and astrology were made available, even to children, on the telephone? Why was there no outcry at the multi-faith prayers at Codessa with its implicit denial that the Lord Jesus is the only mediator between God and men? Why is there no protest when cinemas are opened on Sundays?

WHEN WILL SOUTH AFRICAN CHRISTIANS WAKE UP AND MAKE THEIR STAND?



4. The water is warmer but Leroy soon settles down to make the best of his new situation, not realising that someone is implementing a hidden agenda.



5. You're in great danger, Leroy! The water is being heated up! Do something about it now! Jump out before it is too late! But Leroy won't listen. He adjusts to the rising temperature and hopes things will not get worse.

You're in great danger, Christian! The Biblical values built into your way of life over the centuries by the blood of countless martyrs are being systematically undermined. It is still not too late to reverse the trend. But you must act NOW! Identify the values that need to be preserved and start working to save them NOW!

number of babies born

WHAT YOU MUST DO!

As this issue of *SIGNPOSTS* stresses, South Africa is being systematically moved from its Christian foundation onto a secular humanist one. This trend can be reversed, but only if Christians stop passively hiding their light under a bushel and stand out against the encroaching darkness and spreading corruption by actively becoming the light of the world and the salt of the earth (Mat 5:13-16). This is how to start!

1. First, identify those values we need to preserve in our society. You can begin by looking at the 11 points mentioned in my letter to Dr Stoffel van der Merwe (page 6). Write to *SIGNPOSTS* (PO Box 26148, Arcadia, 0007) or phone (012 98-2680) and ask for back numbers of our newsletter. These will provide you with more details on some of these points. Turn up all the Bible references mentioned and study the passages carefully.

2. Increase your knowledge by getting onto the mailing lists of like minded organisations such as the Aida Parker Newsletter, PO Box 91059, Auckland Park 2006; Christians for Truth, Private Bag 250, Kranskop 3550; Concerned Christian Women for SA, PO Box 5452, Walmer, 6065; Frontline Fellowship, PO Box 74, Newlands, 7725; Gospel Defence League, PO Box 17007, Regent Road, 8061 and United Christian Action, PO Box 36129, Glosderrey 7702. Ask each of these groups for samples of their publications.

3. Link up with Christians who share the same concerns. For those in the PWV area, Transvaal Christian Action (PO Box 915-1507, Faerie Glen, 0043), holds regular seminars on these practical issues. Write to them and ask for details of coming meetings. Similar seminars are held by Cape Christian Action (PO Box 36129 Glosderrey 7702) for those in the Cape.

4. Gather your friends together to pray and plan the kind of



6. Too late! Leroy has waited too long! The water is now so hot that he is no longer able to hop out!



7. The end is inevitable. Leroy has been boiled alive! Christian, if you fail to act NOW, you will soon find yourself in a land dominated by secular humanist moral values with growing restrictions on your ability to present the Gospel as the only way of salvation. Then it will be too late. But you can still do something NOW!

tion of your pastor. Urge

action you can take. Remember the effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man accomplishes a lot (Jas 5:16-18). As we raise a great volume of prayer to the Lord, He will roll back the tide of evil. Salt Shakers (PO Box 36129, Glosderrey, 7702) is providing the kind of information you need to similar groups around the country. These groups have already scored major victories such as persuading Pick 'n Pay not to stock magazines like Penthouse and Scope.

5. Become active and speak out on Biblical issues. Commit yourself to write one or two short, concise letters each month for publication in the newspapers in your area. Present accurate information and give reasons for your opinions. Avoid being purely emotional. You should also write to government leaders, especially the local Member of Parliament in your area. A sincere, personal letter expressing your concern IS effective. When an MP begins to hear the same concerns from different people, he will be aware of what is important to his constituency. Remember, he understands that a personal letter or phone call represents about 1000 people who did not take the trouble of expressing their feelings. The same is true of SATV. Write to them and complain about those programmes you find objectionable. You should also bring the information you gather to the attention of your pastor. Urge him to prayerfully consider it.

Edward Cain

NP'S LETTER ON CHRISTIANITY IN THE NEW SOUTH AFRICA

Thank you for your facsimile of 21 February 1992. I also refer to your letter to the State President of the same date and your facsimile to the office of the Minister of Constitutional Development, dated 4 March 1992. I find the questions asked and the points raised by you most stimulating and relevant to the times we live in.

There is indeed no doubt in our minds that at the conclusion of the negotiation process Christianity in this country will be as strong as ever. We stand, after all, firmly on the principle of religious freedom. That will ensure that South Africa will still be a Christian country because, as you pointed out, the vast majority of our people are Christians. It is, after all, the number of practising

In its last issue, SIGNPOSTS reproduced a letter to the State President inquiring about the status of Christianity in the new South Africa. This letter, dated 6 March 1992, was received from Dr C J (Stoffel) van der Merwe, Secretary-general of the National Party. Emphasis has been added - Editor.

Christians that really determines the Christian character of a country, and not so much the decrees of the state. I briefly submit some perspectives pertaining to your specific questions:

1. The Sovereignty of the Triune God is not explicitly mentioned in our present constitution. However, the first paragraph of the Preamble to the Constitution goes a

long way. Furthermore Christian norms and values are stated as national goals. I have no reason to believe it will be different in a future constitution.

2. The National Party is firmly against State interference in the bona fide affairs of any religion.

3. The duties of any modern government are not merely confined to defence and law and order. The State must also provide for education, health services, housing, protection of the environment and so forth. We cannot escape these responsibilities.

4. We in the National Party also believe strongly in private ownership and the free market system. Any social obligations of the State should not undermine these two concepts.

5. Capital punishment still applies in South Africa. We are, however, aware of the fact that it has been abolished in some Christian countries. Whether this can be done in South Africa is indeed an open question. Even judges differ on this. It is, therefore, a matter of further frank and penetrating debate.

6. For centuries our legal system has been based on Roman-Dutch law. We believe that in any future dispensation an independent judiciary must be the cornerstone of the constitutional state. A well-balanced Charter of Fundamental Rights is also foreseen. As far as mere mortals can judge, our legal system is a human version of natural law!

7 & 8. The National Party is already taking steps to give parents

a greater say in and responsibility for the education of their children. The envisaged Model C schools are a further step in this direction. In this context a community that feels strongly for or against sex education and evolution will be in a very strong position to implement its own version.

9. Pornography cannot be defended on moral grounds. It is, therefore, quite perturbing to witness the dedication with which many individuals pursue the possession of such material - demanding their right to decide for themselves what is good for them and what is not. I believe the Church has a crucial role to play in this regard. It is, once again, only religion that can transform and purify the inner convictions of people. The State's decrees so often tend to be but cosmetic. There is no reason, however, to think that the present legislation against pornography will not be continued into the future, on even tightened up.

10. The question of the rights of the unborn child is a lively one and strong views are held by opposing sides. We intend handling this with great sensitivity and the input of Churches in this regard will be welcomed and will carry great weight. The same applies as in the case of your question 11. The fact of the matter is, however, that Christian churches differ greatly on how the Sabbath should be honoured. Is it the task of the State to decide which church is right in this regard?

I trust that these replies provide you with some clarity regarding our approach to these relevant issues. Your own input into the discussion will also be welcomed in future.

WHY CHRISTIANS WANT BIBLICAL VALUES IN THE NEW SA

Many thanks for your long and detailed letter of 6 March. I do appreciate the time you spent in the midst of an intensive referendum campaign to give such a comprehensive reply to the questions raised in my letter of 21 February. I am so glad you found the questions to be most stimulating and relevant to the times in which we live.

Unfortunately your reply reached me too late to be included in the special referendum edition of *SIGNPOSTS*, the deadline for which was February 28, as I mentioned in my fax to you of February 26. However as the subject matter of your letter is still relevant to the ongoing negotiation process, I will be reproducing it in full in our next edition.

The following reply from Dr Edward Cain was sent to Dr van der Merwe on March 23, 1992. Emphasis has been added - Editor.

Now that the rush of the very short referendum campaign is over, this is a good time to explain briefly our position. As Bible-believing Christians, we start from the fundamental position that God actually exists, that He has spoken in a unique way through our Lord Jesus Christ and that His complete revelation has been preserved for us in the Bible. We believe that the main message of the Bible is how sinful men and women can be reconciled to the Holy God. This is achieved when people repent of their sins and put their faith in the atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary. They turn from darkness to light, become the sons of God and have the assurance of an incorruptible inheritance reserved for them in heaven (Acts 26:18; John 1:12; I Peter 1:4). For the rest of their time on earth, their desire is to serve the Living and True God (I Thessalonians 1:9).

It is our earnest desire that God would bless the new South Africa. We know that God's blessing is conditional on obeying the instructions He has laid down in His Word. Those instructions are given to the individual, to the family, to the Church and to the wider society, or if you like, to the civil government. We

believe that, at the time of the Reformation, many Biblical principles were built into the societies of the countries of Europe, especially the Protestant ones. Even though the principles were applied imperfectly by fallible men, God was able to bless those countries. They were marked by hard work, great resourcefulness and inventive creativity. As a result they prospered greatly. Many countries, like the United States, Australia and South Africa, were partakers of that heritage and shared in God's blessing.

We fear that with the passing of the years, Christians have neglected their heritage. As a result, the Biblical principles in what can be called the Western way of life have been replaced by ideas coming from the mind of rebellious man. This rebellion reached its peak in those countries which followed the ideology of Marxism/Leninism. They totally rejected God and the guidelines He gives for the good ordering of life on earth. Although it has taken many years, the breaking of God's moral, economic and political principles has resulted in total disaster in those lands.

Because we do not want to repeat the mistakes made there, we continually search the Bible to seek out God's principles which need to be obeyed in the new South Africa to ensure His blessing. We see a sharp distinction between the values which God can bless and many of the values which are current in the world today. We believe the latter derive from man's ideas and are symptomatic of man's rebellion against God as outlined in Psalm

2 where the Psalmist pictures the rulers of the earth scheming to throw off every restraint God has placed on them. The eleven questions in my letter of February 21 highlight the areas of contrast between Biblical norms and man's ideas.

Let me make it clear at this point that we are not involved in party politics and have no desire to become involved in them. Our intention is to uphold the principles of God's Word and let them shine on our society. Of necessity, they will also shine on the policies of political parties.

I do appreciate the time you took to deal with each question. Allow me to explain why we see the questions as important.

Question 1 MENTIONING GOD IN THE CONSTITUTION

There are two reasons why we want the Triune God to be mentioned in any future constitution. Firstly, if we want God to bless us as a nation, we need to honour Him as a nation. One of the ways we can do this is by acknowledging Him in the constitution. This is the case of our present constitution for, although the word Triune does not appear, it is clear from the context of the preamble that the Almighty God who is referred to is the God of the Bible. For this reason, the prayers made at Codesa to other gods caused great concern to many Christians who saw them as a breaking of the First Commandment and to be in conflict with the stated aim of the preamble to uphold Christian values. They feared that this was an indication that South Africa was moving towards becoming a secular state in which all reference to God would be removed from the constitution.

Secondly, because the overwhelming majority of South Africans (77 percent according to the 1980 census) of all races identify themselves as Christians (as opposed to, say, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Marxists, secular humanists or atheists), it is right, from the democratic point of view, that the constitution should reflect Christian norms and values, rather than those of other religions or ideologies.

We are so glad that you see no reason why the preamble should be changed in a future constitution. We would be even happier if the National Party would commit itself to strive to ensure that the wording would not be weakened.

Question 2 NON INTERFERENCE IN CHURCH AFFAIRS

We are most grateful that your party firmly opposes State interference in Church matters. We trust it will endeavour to ensure that this will also be true for any future government.

Questions 3 and 4 STATE DUTIES AND THE FREE MARKET

It is our firm conviction that the Bible limits the role of the government to defence and law and order. Because of human fallibility, the Bible envisages a decentralisation of power by placing a lot of responsibility on the individual, the family and the Church while putting limited power in the hands of the State. We are well aware of the modern trend towards concentrating power in the hands of the State by removing responsibility from the other three levels of government (individual self-government, family government and church government). This trend reached its peak in the former Communist countries where a bloated, corrupt and inefficient bureaucracy took practically all decisions, thereby depriving the individual of virtually all initiative and responsibility.

It is true that the same trend is to be found in the United States where, for example, the War On Want programme launched by President Johnson in 1964, has grown to an enormous bureaucracy spending billions of dollars annually in an attempt to uplift the poor and bring about social justice. However 80 percent of the money goes on administration and, by creating dependency, the problem of poverty in America is greater than it ever was. We believe that the social and economic failures in Communist countries and the inability of the wealthy United States to solve its poverty problem is because the guidelines given by God in the Bible were ignored. The Bible puts the responsibility of helping the poor on the individual, the Church and private charity organisations, rather than on the State. As already indicated, wherever the State has tried to solve the problem using the Keynesian concepts of government activism and deficit spending, it has failed. We hope the new South Africa will learn from the mistakes of others and not fall into the same trap.

We believe that many of the rent and service charges boycotts in Black townships are ideologically motivated and designed to induce the State to provide free housing and services. This is naturally very attractive to the residents who fail to realise that in the long run they will eventually pay for these benefits (through increased taxation) and will have their freedom of choice limited. We further believe that State intervention, for example in the housing market, is not compatible with the free market system.

Question 5 CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

While it is true that capital punishment still applies in South Africa, no-one has been executed since November 1989 and each passing day makes it more difficult to implement the law. While we cannot ignore the practices of other countries, we believe the principles God has given us in the Bible are of greater importance. God gives us a clear instruction in Genesis, chapter 9, verse 6: *"Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man"*.

This verse teaches that human life is precious and gives as the reason that it is created in God's image. To protect human life, God has placed a high value on it. He has ordained that anyone who wilfully kills another must forfeit his own life. Since the death penalty was suspended, tens of thousands of South Africans have lost their lives in criminal and political murders. This indicates that the Biblical principle is also true in the negative sense. When a murderer does not forfeit his own life, human life is devalued and is regarded as cheap. Murders therefore increase.

This is another instance which shows the importance of implementing the principles of the Bible and the consequences of ignoring them. Of course, our natural instinct is to show mercy to murderers. But we usually do not realise that when we do that, we are depriving the victims and their families of mercy, people who are surely more entitled to mercy than the killers. Because we want the new South Africa to be a safe place for all its law-abiding citizens, we ask the National Party to ensure that those found guilty of first-degree murder will be executed.

Question 6 THE LEGAL SYSTEM

By asking for the assurance that the National Party will insist that the legal system in the new South Africa will be based on natural law derived from Biblical law, our intention was to contrast it with progressive law. Under the former, judges apply the law on the basis of previous decisions. Under the latter, judges make

law. An instance of the departure from Biblical law is shown above in the case of the refusal of the State to execute murderers and the resultant great increase in the killing of defenceless people. Another consequence of progressive law is that actions which were previously legal become illegal, as seen below.

Questions 7 and 8 THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN EDUCATION

We are indeed grateful to the National Party for giving parents a greater say in and responsibility for the education of their children through Model "C" schools. We do trust that this will also be accepted by those parents who voted for Model "B" schools. Of far greater concern to us is the lady who was sentenced to five years imprisonment by the district magistrate in Pretoria on March 12 for teaching her own children and those of friends in a private learning centre. While it is true that the sentence was suspended, should the lady again teach the children the sentence would come into full effect and she would be a second offender.

Let me stress that the people concerned are not members of a strange sect or hippie-type drug abusers. They are members of the Gereformeerde Kerke and, except for this offence, are fine upright, law-abiding members of society. Like the Huguenots of old, they feel their only crime is their desire to raise their children in their faith and this is why they are being persecuted. Surely they should be praised for paying their taxes and yet taking on the extra burden of educating their children without demanding a cent back from the State!

The point at stake here is whether the parents or the State knows what is best for the children. As Christians, we maintain that the parents, who brought the children into the world and who nurtured them for many years, are in a better position to judge what is in the best interests of the children than an anonymous state bureaucrat. In the case in question, a boy matriculated with three distinctions from the private learning centre the year before the matter was brought to court. So the quality of education is not at stake, only compliance with State regulations.

We believe that this conflict between the State and parents will increase as compulsory sex education is introduced into schools. Parents will look at the results of sex education in other countries, such as the recent horrific case of the rape of a 5-year old girl by a gang of 7-year old boys, and refuse to have the minds of their children polluted in this way. We also see this as an example of progressive law where an action which does not constitute a crime in natural or Biblical law constitutes a serious offence.

It is to avoid criminalising honest, law-abiding citizens who are motivated by a love for their children and a desire to act in their best interests that we appeal to you to give us the assurance that parents in the present situation in South Africa and in the new South Africa will be permitted to send their children to the schools of their choice and not be forced to accept the moral or ideological values espoused by the State.

Question 9 PORNOGRAPHY

We fully agree that the Church has a crucial role in combating pornography through the transforming and purifying of the inner convictions of people. However we are fully aware that not all people will respond to the Christian call to repentance and faith.

Many will refuse. In this case, society (through the State) has two responsibilities. It must restrain the sin that lies latent in the human heart by depriving people of the pornographic material that will inflame their lustful desires. Secondly it must protect the victims, the innocent (the children) and the weaker members of society (women) from being exploited by the commercialisation of pornography and being turned into instruments for the satisfaction of lust. In this area the Church is powerless. The State must implement and enforce laws to this end.

Many Christians are deeply perturbed by the flood of pornography that is sweeping through our country. Of particular concern is the pornography that is available, even to children, through the telephone, some of which is advertised as XXX-rated sexual adventures of young women.

Some of us recall the testimony of an American serial killer, Ted Bundy, who sexually abused and murdered scores of young women. Shortly before he was executed, he traced his problem back to the soft-porn magazines he bought from a corner shop at the age of 12 or 13, even though he was raised in a Christian home. In time he graduated to hard-core porn. He said that over the course of many months, the desire gradually built up within him to put into practice in real life that with which he had been filling his mind. His lust led to the deaths of many young women. In Ted Bundy we have a terrifying example of why the State needs to supplement the evangelising work of the Church by protecting innocent children, even those from Christian homes, and vulnerable young women. I need not remind you of the great rise in sexual crimes in this country that has accompanied the flood of pornography.

Questions 10 and 11 ABORTION AND THE SABBATH

The Bible clearly teaches that human life begins at conception (see, for example, Jeremiah 1:5 and Luke 1:44) a fact which is borne out by medical evidence. When the State legalises abortion, it deprives the child of the legal protection afforded it by the Bible (Exodus 21:22-25). In effect, the State takes upon itself the task of defining a human and decrees that an unborn child is less than fully human. It is thus following the example of Hitler's Nazi state which, by defining certain groups of people as not fully human, opened the way for them to be killed without compunction. Wherever abortion has been legalised, it has resulted in a veritable holocaust of the unborn. The devaluing of human life through abortion has also led to an increase in the brutalising of young children and demands for the killing of the chronically ill, the severely handicapped and the elderly.

We look to you to give us the assurance that the National Party will strive to ensure that the unborn child is recognised as fully human and is fully protected by the law in any new constitution and that Christians will not be forced to work on the Lord's Day.

These then are some of the values we believe will lead to God's blessing on the new South Africa if they are implemented. It is for this reason that we would like the National Party to assure us that it will strive to safeguard them in a future dispensation.

Be assured that we are continuing to pray for you and for all in authority that our country might honour God and, as a result, enjoy His blessing of peace and prosperity in the coming days.

SIGNPOSTS is published by Signpost Publications and Research Centre, PO Box 26148, Arcadia 0007, South Africa.
(Tel 012 - 98-2680). All correspondence should be sent to this address. Annual subscription rates: R36 (Overseas US\$40).

Bel-El Druckers