

Intermountain District Christian Action Committee 2009

Contemporary living places strong pressure upon Christians to compromise moral and ethical values in the areas of work, recreation, and worship. As the Church, we have an extraordinary opportunity to demonstrate the vitality of the Christian faith, equipping our people to respond effectively to the forces of evil through biblically-shaped resistance to the avalanche of crumbling ethical and moral values. Therefore, we recommend the adoption of the following statements:

1. PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN LIVING - We recommend that we keep before our people the principles as set forth in "The Covenant of Christian Character" (*Manual* 27-27.3, 903.1-903.15). We further recommend these *Manual* statements be printed and distributed periodically throughout the year.

2. CHRISTIAN FAMILY - Recognizing that a strong America is dependent upon strong churches and strong families, we emphasize the importance of Christian family life. We caution our people to beware of and to resist efforts to redefine the family in terms that violate the biblical concept of the sanctity of marriage between one man and one woman (*Manual* 35-37). We recommend that each of our families spend time praying, reading the Word, and worshiping together. We also suggest that each church evaluate its calendar and programs to assure that church activities are planned to be "family friendly." Our pastors and people are also encouraged to aggressively respond to the needs of single-parent families.

3. MORAL VALUES - We appeal to our local and district leaders and pastors to give strong emphasis in our Christian Education curriculum and from our pulpits to such basic biblical truths as will develop the sense of discernment and discrimination between good and evil.

4. MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY - We recognize that media and contemporary technology can be either a powerful resource for good or a harmful promoter of the evils of the day. In the light of numerous victimizations of children and the merchandising of smut and pornography through the internet, it is necessary to heighten awareness of this peril. We believe parents in our churches should take all possible means to protect their children from pedophiles and all others who would prey on them; and that we all should guard our eyes and our hearts from that which will eventually defile, destroy, and damn our souls. We should commend those who sponsor the good and let our voices be heard against the unacceptable.

5. COMMENDATIONS AND CONCERNS - We encourage our people to express appreciation to individuals, elected officials, media, and other organizations who support values consistent with biblical standards in society. We also pray for and express concern to those who oppose such values. Knowing that all that is necessary for evil to prevail is for good persons to do nothing, we strongly urge that our local churches seek to involve their people in forms of ministry that will model our biblical standards of morality to the communities in which they live.

6. GAMBLING - Gambling (legalized lotteries included) has gained an unparalleled foothold these past years. Gambling is addictive in nature, potentially inflicting or increasing poverty in the lives of those who participate and their dependents. Gambling undermines personal trust in God and our responsibility to work faithfully (1 Thessalonians 4:11-12). We appeal to each church to oppose gambling and

legalized lotteries.

7. COMPASSIONATE MINISTRY - In these times of social transition from welfare dependency to self-reliance and work programs for dependent persons, our people must be concerned about the needy of our communities. By providing food, clothing, and shelter, we can continue in the footsteps of our founding fathers — that is, taking the Gospel to the hurting. We encourage our people to support faith-based and community initiatives which care for the less fortunate and to foster social services available in their area that develop compassionate community partnerships.

8. LORD'S DAY SANCTITY - We urge that the Lord's Day continue to be observed as “. . . a day wholly unto the Lord,” set aside for the worship of God and the recuperation of our bodies. We urge Christians to avoid participation in those activities which take away from the sanctity of the Lord's Day.

9. We urge our people, in observance of biblical truth, to oppose the popular assumption that homosexual and lesbian behaviors are normal and acceptable, and that political, business, media and entertainment organizations which favor and/or glorify this immoral and destructive behavior be rejected.

We further request the Sunday School and Discipleship Ministries of the General Church develop a curriculum objectively addressing the benefits of obedience to the biblical standard of moral conduct, emphasizing the known disintegrating results inherent in homosexual activity, and encouraging the church to act redemptively by praying and believing that God can transform any and every individual.

10. Recognizing the biblical standard of reaching out to all people regardless of race, color, class, language, or ethnicity, we encourage our churches to take deliberate and intentional steps to reach out to and include all peoples in our congregations and ministries. We stand opposed to any attempts to segregate people by race, color, class, language, or ethnic group.

11. CREATION - The Church of the Nazarene believes in the biblical account of creation. We oppose any godless interpretation of the origin of the universe and of humankind. We firmly believe that God is the Creator.

12. SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE - We believe in the sanctity of human life and must unite to protect against abortion and embryonic stem cell research that requires the destruction of the human embryo. We ought also to protect against all efforts to legalize euthanasia and against the withholding of reasonable medical care to the handicapped, the terminally ill, or the elderly. Life is a gift from God. All human life, including life developing in the womb, is created by God in His image and is, therefore, to be nurtured, supported, and protected from the moment of conception. We oppose induced abortion by any means when used for either personal convenience or population control (*Manual* 36).

We further recommend that each local church board establish a Christian Action Committee of no less than three persons who will report to the board semi-annually actions taken to implement the statements of the adopted report of the District Christian Action Committee and to provide information to the local church that will assist in stimulating a Christian response to the social issues of our times.

Recognizing that a holy life begins within and realizing that the keen edge of spiritual living can be dulled, it is imperative that we are diligent in monitoring what we allow to enter our homes and our minds. Our final admonition comes from the pen of Paul who sums up the intent of this report: “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are

pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things” (Philippians 4:8).

It should be noted that the District Assembly is not a legislative body and therefore recommends the delegation refer to the *Church of the Nazarene Manual 2005-2009* for current actions on social issues (Manuals are available from Nazarene Publishing House). If discussion of this report is desired, appointments with the District Advisory Board can be considered through the Intermountain District Office.

Respectfully submitted,

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ERIC SEANEY, Chairman