

Lecture 7

Rev. Jerry Falwell, Chief Justice Roy Moore, Tim LaHaye, Tom DeLay

JERRY FALWELL. Along with Pat Robertson we have the most important leader in America of the fundamentalist movement, and its relation to both church and politics. Falwell has been around a long time, and has many accomplishments. He is a frequent television commentator, and is interviewed by the top guns. He spends time in the White House, and is the confidant of all the presidents since Nixon except Clinton of course. Liberty University was founded by him, and his reach extends into millions of homes with his own television programs. He also founded the Moral Majority.

What I want to concentrate on today is just one thing that we haven't touched on much before this class – family. This is such a huge issue that it may well have swung the election. The fight against gay marriage was pounced on with gusto – maybe that isn't such a good metaphor – by the conservatives of all stripes, but leading the charge was Falwell. It has been said that Kerry lost the election because of the Chief Justice of Massachusetts when she ruled that gay marriages were OK. After that, all Bush had to do was point to New England and say 'Do you want another liberal to run America, and wouldn't you know it, he is from Massachusetts along with Ted Kennedy?' BOO. HISS. 'I believe in the sanctity of marriage and will ask for a Constitutional Amendment to say that marriage is between a man and a woman, and any other form will not be allowed.' There went the election, along with many other factors of course. I think most observers would now say that if any one of those fundamentalist factors – gay marriage, abortion, school prayer, 10 Commandments – had been eliminated that Bush may well have lost.

But there are other forms of family life that Falwell deals with too. The book I am using is *The New American Family – the Rebirth of the American Dream* 1992 with a forward by Jack Kemp, former Congressman and vice-presidential candidate for the Republicans.

I am interested in the sub-title as well. 5 years ago I started a Center for the American Dream at Penn State Erie with the stated purpose to find out what the dream is, see who it benefits, and who is losing because of it, and to wonder about exporting it to the world. You can find it on the web site listed, and we have had some exciting programs. Cornel West was a featured speaker, a minister and academic at Princeton who is a liberal. The term generally raises either an eyebrow or forces a laugh over here, but I want to explain that it is the dominating ideology of America.

What people mean by success or the American Dream embodies fundamental assumptions about moral action on the public as well as the individual level. Yet tragically, there is almost no place in American public life where these issues can be discussed. ...people are open to questioning the cultural ground of their lives. ...only then will Americans have public purchase on how to enact new definitions of success, the good life, and the American Dream that may restore a broader sense of purpose to our individual endeavors. [Elizabeth Long, *The American Dream and the Popular Novel*, 1985]

What is the American Dream? There are many definitions ranging from individual success to national hopes for justice and equality. Most people came to these shores because of it. It was James Truslow Adams who coined the phrase. He wrote:

[The American Dream is] that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement. It is a difficult dream for the European upper classes to interpret adequately, and too many of us ourselves have grown weary and mistrustful of it. It is not a dream of motor cars and high wages merely, but a dream of a social order in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and be recognized by others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position. [*The Epic of America*, 1931]

But we cannot ignore many American Nightmares. Slaughter of natives, slavery of blacks, exploitation of immigrants, indifference to the poor, restriction of the workers, relegation of women, consumerist glut, environmental destruction, colonialist expansions - were these aided and abetted by some interpretations of the Dream? Can faulty dreams lead to personal or ethnic despair and even crime when individual or group expectations are more than reality will allow?

Individual Dreams

From Horatio Alger to the present day we have pushed and pulled at the dream of success. Many associate successes with moral virtue – your victories show that you are a good citizen, a loved child, an upright parent, and favored by God. This has energized millions and doubtless has helped America socially and economically. Hard work, reliability, and inventiveness are claimed to be the mainstays of American international success as well.

But what if you fail? Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* is an American classic. This potent myth was the cause of Willy Loman's downfall. He tried as hard as he could, but in the end

Willy ran his car into a tree. We must ask what are the criteria of success in the nation, are they healthy, is there anything that can be done about it, and are we living a contradiction being vaguely aware that our wealth and security depend on motivating people to pursue a potentially harmful dream of success? Is this a sly way to keep the rich in place?

National Dreams

Malcolm X said: 'I don't see an American dream – I see a nightmare.' Yet from the beginning America had visions of itself as a chosen and successful nation set apart to show the world the virtues of democracy, capitalism, individualism, and service to others. Internally, Americans prided themselves on the ability to turn the country around on

social issues, but even though slavery ceased, Abraham Lincoln called America the “*almost* chosen people” realizing many faults were not yet overcome.

Martin Luther King jr., standing on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial a century after the Emancipation Proclamation, called for a restatement of the dreams of the founders and Lincoln so that freedom and equality could be gained for the blacks and other oppressed American groups:

So I say to you, my friends, that even though we must face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed – we hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal...[let us] speed up that day when all of God’s children – black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Catholics and Protestants – will be able to join hands and to sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, “Free at last, free at last; thank God Almighty, we are free at last.”

This is not what Jerry Falwell stands for. He doesn’t refer to these questions, or the previous ones about questioning the basis of US ideology. He was against King from the start. He has another vision of the Dream, and it is based on a conservative view of the family.

‘Truly family values, like all human values, are God’s territory. These are the values that are recorded in the Bible and values that are seen most clearly in the life of Jesus Christ.

His words and His life show that he valued truth, mercy, justice, individual dignity, respect for life, compassion, giving, self-sacrifice, purity, commitment to marriage and to family, religious authenticity, and both personal and national responsibility. ... But before we can join together to develop a new American family based on Christ's values, we need to know who is seeking to destroy family values and how these efforts are ruining lives.' [62]

Here is the hit list:

Pornography

Abortion

Schools that promote sex education that purge traditional moral concepts;
 Courts that are liberal and separate church and state – e.g. he cites a then recent Supreme Court decision decreed it unconstitutional for a Denver 5th grade student to have *The Story of Jesus* in the library, but a book on Greek gods was allowed to stay. He claims that the courts are anti-Christian in their decisions.

Planned Parenthood

ACLU [American Civil Liberties Union]

'Me-ism' is damaging especially when it comes to divorce and family life generally.

Secular Humanism agenda in the schools;

New Age Movement;

Radical Feminism;

The Sexual Revolution

Homosexuals in the armed forces

Welfare Queens and Welfare generally

High taxes that penalize the family

Anti-family bias in the media

Satanic worship and the Occult

Single Parents

Booze in the home [not guns however]

Homelessness

Lack of commitment; communication in the home

Infidelity

What does God want for families?

Marriage built on passion won't work. It is short lived. 'Love' has become a confusing word in our culture, so we need to realize that genuine love involves both feelings and thinking. Prayer together is important. Communication is vital between all members.

Also Ephesians 5.22 comes into play. 'Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.' [174] Of course husbands can be despots who demand compliance, and are harsh and unloving. But both must submit to one another in the context of commanding husbands to love your wives as Christ loved the church. This takes away male dominance so he says. Interestingly the Southern Baptist Church recently affirmed Eph 5 for today, and also said it will no longer ordain women. Those who are already ordained can stay,

but it shall go no further. Men must lead. That is their role. Deuteronomy 6 and other passages are quoted. Proverbs 31 on being a good wife applies to women now, not just then. This is fundamentalism of course – it all applies now as it did then.

Kids are to obey. Some choice quotes:

“I adamantly resist any ‘family agenda’ set by government, based on principles which do not acknowledge the centrality of faith and morality in the home.” [197]

“We should show responsible concern for the earth, but never at the expense of our first duty to the men, women, and children who inhabit it.” [209] What this means in practical terms is not spelled out, but it isn’t hard to speculate on what it might mean considering the almost total lack of interest in the environment by conservatives generally.

And don’t let the schools set the agenda. Either protest, or get out and start home-schooling. This is now very big indeed in the Red States.

Here are some remarks by Bishop John Spong:

I lived in Lynchburg, Virginia, before Jerry Falwell rose to national prominence. He was a race baiting segregationist to his core. Liberty Baptist College began as a segregation academy. Super patriot Falwell condemned Nelson Mandela as a 'communist' and praised the apartheid regime in South Africa as a 'bulwark for Christian civilization.' I have heard Pat Robertson attack the movement to give equality to women by referring to feminists as Lesbians who want to destroy the family, while quoting the Bible to defeat the Equal Rights Amendment. The homophobic rhetoric that spews so frequently out of the mouths of these "Jesus preaching" right-wingers has been mentioned time and again as factors that encourage hate crimes.

CHIEF JUSTICE ROY MOORE AND ROY'S ROCK

Once upon a time in the foyer of the Alabama Supreme Court stood a 5280 pound hewn rock of the 10 Commandments. The locals called it "Roy's Rock." Chief Justice Roy Moore sneaked the monument into the building during the night in the summer of August 2001 when none of his fellow justices were there. The next day Justice Moore had an unveiling to the astonishment of all present.

It became famous. Busloads of church groups come almost daily to see the monument. Some stop to pray in front of it every morning. "He has become a folk hero," said Emory Folmar, the conservative former mayor of Montgomery. 77% of Alabamians polled by the University of South Alabama said they approved of the monument.

Moore has a reputation for his religious views. A former kickboxer and ranch hand, he does radio shows and helps raise money for evangelical groups. The roots of this go back a way. In 1992 Justice Moore was appointed a judge in Etowah County in northwestern Alabama. One of the first things he did was to hang a homemade rosewood plaque of the Ten Commandments in his courtroom. Three years later, the ACLU sued. The first judge ordered Moore to take it down. Moore refused. The governor Fob James Jr. threatened to send in the National Guard to protect Moore's plaque. He was later elected Chief Justice partly at least on his promise to put the Ten Commandments in the State Supreme Court. He claims he will never remove it.

Apparently it means a lot to southern conservatives to have it there. It is seen by many as an attempt to claim back the law and the courts to God. At a time when America is debating references to God in public life from the Pledge of Allegiance to statehouse plaques, the implications are huge. Moore's supporters claim that the First Amendment's ban on Congress establishing laws favoring religion has become 'a sword to sever the historic relationship between God and our government.' The Ten Commandments, it is claimed, are the foundation of Western law and should be displayed so that all can see them. On videotape produced by Coral Ridges Ministries of Fort Lauderdale, Florida that is being sold to help for Moore's defense, he launches into one of his poems:

Choosing godless judges, we've thrown reason out the door

Too soft to put a killer in a well-deserved tomb, but brave enough to kill that child
before it leaves the womb ...

You think that God's not angry that this land is a moral slum?

Moore's opponents claim that placing the Commandments where they are is coercive and favors one religion over others.

Federal Judge Myron Thompson agreed. In a 93-page opinion he said that the monument is 'nothing less than an obtrusive year-round religious display intended to proselytize on behalf of a particular religion, the chief justice's religion.' He said in essence – Thou shalt not stick the Commandments in a public place. An appeal was not heard by the Supreme Court in 2005.

It is still an issue in Congress.

On **October 23, 1990** Senator Phil Gramm [R – Texas], one of the leading conservatives in Congress, inserted a statement in the Congressional Record called *Celebration of Freedom*. In commending the thousands of Soviet Jews emigrating in ‘a great modern-day exodus’, he said, “Mr. President, there are many lessons in the Book of Exodus that apply today: the struggle for justice versus tyranny, the liberation of Passover and the Ten Commandments.” He likened this exodus to the original one from Egypt.¹

Though there are many instances in Congress when accounts of freedom or pleas for liberation of a people or new deals for oppressed ethnic groups within America are mentioned, there are few attempts as Senator Gramm’s to link them to the exodus traditions. Much more common are references to the Ten Commandments without mention or application of the context of the revolt that preceded them. I have examples of these that will constitute the main part of this chapter.

In **January 1993** Senator Jesse Helms [R - North Carolina], the second oldest member of the Senate and in 1995 the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, stated his principles of morality for America in his introduction to legislation. He makes it clear that the Ten Commandments are central to his thinking:

We are not threatened in a military or material sense. We are – despite reports to the contrary – the globe’s military and economic colossus. America’s armed

¹ 136 CongRec S 16848

might stand unchallenged. The evil empire is a thing of the past. Our economy is twice the size of our nearest competitor – Japan.

Why then is our great country in danger? Mr. President, I believe we are in a war – in the sense that we are engaged in a struggle for the soul of America.

He goes on to list a number of problems: free sex, illegitimacy, pornography, drug culture – and the “feel good factor” – if it feels good, it’s OK. He continues:

So I think it is a significant question, a relevant question to ask, ‘Where are we headed?’ Quo vadis, America? What can be said in a Nation where the highest Court in the land declares that the display of the Ten Commandments and the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance in a public school is illegal while the very same public school hands out condoms to sixth graders and preaches the equality of perverted sexual lifestyles? Mr. President, we are losing a spiritual war and it is eating away at our national security from within.

He goes on to claim that multiculturalism essentially means

multimorality – the denial of the universal truths embodied in the Judeo-Christian ethic. ... If America is to survive, there must be an American reawakening ... we must have the courage and decency to stand up for life, the family, and all of the other principles that made this nation great in the first place.

On **March 18, 1993**, Newt Gingrich [R – Georgia], later to be House Majority Leader, weighed in. He noted the recent decision by the Cobb Commission to appeal to the US District Court decision directing the Ten Commandments be removed from the State

Court Building. He placed two newspaper articles in the Congressional Record about the relation between moral decline and the loss of the Ten Commandments.²

As arguments about gun control started to mount in **August 1994**, Duncan Hunter [R – CA] went on the attack against Rep. Charles Schumer [now Senator from New York] who criticized Charlton Heston’s role as Moses in the film *The Ten Commandments*.

Coming from his big government district in New York, Mr. Schumer probably would have preferred a movie entitled ‘Pharaoh Knows Best.’ ... If pouring social programs into New York City solved crime, there would not be a single pickpocket left. Hug-a-thug does not work. We need more Ben Hurs, more Will Pennys, more Andrew Jacksons, and more Moseses.³

We skip a few years to more substantive debates but couched in less amusing language. On March 4, 1997 the House of Representatives had one debate on the agenda – expressing the sense of Congress regarding the display of the Ten Commandments by Judge Roy S. Moore, a judge on the circuit court of the State of Alabama.⁴ The incident was caused by another circuit judge in Alabama ordering Judge Moore to remove a copy of the Ten Commandments that he had posted in his courtroom. The Alabama Supreme Court granted a stay to review the matter.⁵ The resolution was as follows:

² 139 CongRec E 691

³ 140 CongRec H 8605

⁴ 143 CongRec H 715 [get bill reference]

⁵ The matter was resolved November 1999 with the Alabama Supreme Court deciding for Judge Moore.

- (1) the Ten Commandments are a declaration of fundamental principles that are the cornerstones of a fair and just society; and*
- (2) the public display, including display in government offices and courthouses, of the Ten Commandments should be permitted.*

Charles Canady [R –Florida] argued that the Chief Justice William Rehnquist of the Supreme Court stated “The Establishment Clause does not require that the public sector be insulated from all things which may have a religious significance or origin.” Canady went on to say that statues of Moses and the Ten Commandments are found in the chamber of the Supreme Court and in the House of Representatives itself.

Robert Aderholt [R –Georgia] said that some wanted to drive any trace of religion from the public square. President John Adams said however that ‘our Constitution was designed for a moral and religious people only. It is wholly inadequate to any other.’ Our national motto is ‘In God we Trust.’ Our nation was founded on Judeo-Christian principles. The retention of the Commandments in the courtroom is crucial and to take them out ignores the foundation of the Nation itself. “How can we promote integrity in our leaders and improve the moral fiber of our people without a basis in some absolute standard?”

Robert Barr [R – Georgia] turned up the heat. “Carry on, Judge [Moore]. Carry on as we will do here in this Chamber despite the constant efforts by the other side to demoralize, de-emphasize this society, and stand here proudly and say in God we trust...” He added that he was glad that Judge Moore’s opponents did not have the audacity to take down the Declaration of Independence as well, as it also includes references to God.

Robert Riley [R –Alabama] quoted two Presidents for the Record:

James Madison: “We have staked the entire future of the American civilization not upon the power of government, but on the capacity for each of us to govern ourselves, to control ourselves, and to sustain ourselves according to the Ten Commandments of God.”

Thomas Jefferson: “I consider ethics as well as religion as supplements to the law and the government of man. Clearly our Constitution and Bill of Rights are built on the foundations of ethics and morality found in the Ten Commandments.”

TIM LAHAYE. Though interesting, I am not going to spend much time on this guy even though he is the biggest fiction seller in the past 10 years in America. His LEFT BEHIND series has sold 60 million copies. He is a premillenarian dispensationalist and sets his stories in the present. The Rapture happens, and we are usually in the Tribulation Period before Christ comes. Satan rules in the guise of the UN, and in *Nicolae* the head of the UN is Nicolae Carpathia loosely modeled on Nicholas Carcescu, the deposed president of Romania. Headquarters is in Babylon, close to Baghdad naturally. He makes a lot of hits on contemporary liberal faiths. For example, ‘Carpathia had scheduled a meeting with Pontifex Maximus Peter Mathews, who had been recently named Supreme Pontiff of Enigma Babylon One World Faith, a conglomeration of all the religions in the world.’ [335] The end times are written up in ghoulish and violent fashion, not unlike the Book of Revelation, which is where he gets a lot of inspiration. The latest one, *Glorious Appearing*, is just out. Christ defeats ‘em all.

Oz Guinness, a leading British evangelical, calls it ‘spiritual junk food for the soul.’

TOM DELAY. The book I use is *The Hammer – Tom Delay; God, Money, and the Rise of the Republican Congress* by Lou Dubose and Jan Reid 2004. He is the Leader of the House of Representatives, born Laredo, Texas 1947 ‘from a family of hard-luck Southerners who scabbled their way out of the Great Depression by means of welding torch and ball peen hammer, not diploma and pedigree.... Tom is heir to a hard edge of the American dream. ... They were a patriarchal bunch brought up to be God-fearing Baptists. College education was a means to an end – money.’ They started out with a family business, an oilfield machine shop with everybody pitching in to keep it afloat. The family was exceptionally dysfunctional, and later his own performance as a husband and father tormented him with guilt – and his treatment of his mother and his siblings should have. He went into pest control. From there by hook or by crook, I am not sure which, he got into Congress, with more or less the same ideas on how to get pests under control – hence ‘The Hammer.’

It is a fascinating story and it shows both the possibility of rise in the US, and some of the harm that can come from pushy Texans who shoot first and forget what the questions are. What I want to concentrate on are his religious views, and how it affects Congress and the state of the nation and international relations. He has a big say in this I’m afraid.

In 2002 DeLay traveled 200 miles from his suburban Houston home to pay a visit to John Hagee’s Cornerstone Church. Pastor Hagee is a long way from the mainstream, even by Texas standards. He has a 5,000 seat sanctuary in San Antonio. He broadcasts over 115

television stations and 110 radio stations. Politicians flock to Cornerstone to ask Hagee's blessing and sign on to his foreign policy agenda. DeLay also addressed the congregation.

Hagee is a Lion of Zion – a Christian Zionist and a premillennial dispensationalist doing all he can to bring on the prelude to the Second Coming of Christ. It goes back to Darby.

Hagee gives the main address. “So listen up Saddam, because we’re being seen in your country tonight. You can sleep in a different bed every night trying to escape the judgment you so richly deserve. It’s not going to help you. There’s a Texan in the White House. And he is going to take you down!” [231] AMEN HALLUJAH Preach it brother.

He cuts Jews in on Christian salvation. His theology includes a loophole for Jews, or to borrow a phrase from Liberation Theology – a preferential option for the Jews. They are covered by the First Covenant – not all his fellow ministers believe this however.

Benjamin Netanyahu is also on the program. He doesn't have to wiggle.

He goes on to denounce the Oslo Peace Accords that Bill Clinton extracted from Arafat and Ehud Barak. What is needed is the idea of expansion of Israel into the territory defined by God's covenant in Lev 22. This does not allow for a Palestinian State. DeLay solemnly promises the congregation that as long as he is running the House, he will use every tool at his disposal to ensure that America continues to preserve and insure the

American alliance with the nation of Israel. He ends by saying, and I quote, “Ladies and gentlemen. What has been spoken here tonight is the truth from God.”

DeLay openly defies Bush, and actually betraying him. While DeLay was in Israel in July 2003, Bush was in Washington trying to breathe some life into his peace plan, while his party’s House majority leader was undermining. Delay delivered a speech so pro-Israel and anti-Palestine that it caught the Israeli far-right by surprise. He put the entire burden of peace onto the Palestinians. The conservative Jerusalem Post was enthusiastic. An Orthodox Jew thrilled to some Israelis as they refer to DeLay as “King of Israel.”

According to the authors, he has promised to get rid of all the Arabists in the State Dept. DeLay called Arafat a thug and declared him a terrorist. When Bush tried to pressure the Israeli government to make some small concessions on the occupation of Palestinian territory, DeLay pressed House Republicans to sign a letter urging the president to back off.

“Negotiating with [the Palestinians] is folly and any agreement arrived at through such empty negotiations would amount to a covenant with death.”

But the big issue is that Jesus cannot return if the president’s modest Middle East policy goals are put in place. [241] If it is a question of Bush or Jesus, Delay might recall JFK’s statement 40 years ago: “Sometimes party loyalty asks too much.” The book chapter that I have been quoting from is titled *Apocalypse Now*.

Appendix

Bishop Spong writes [before the 2004 election]:

Yes, other campaigns bend the truth but these tactics go beyond just bending, they assassinate character and suggest traitorous behavior. When that is combined with the fact that this party does this while proclaiming itself the party of religion, cultural values and faith-based initiatives is the final straw for me. I experience the religious right as a deeply racist enterprise that seeks to hide its intolerance under the rhetoric of super patriotism and "family values." For those who think that this is too strong a charge or too out of bounds politically, I invite you to look at the record.

It was George H. W. Bush who gave us Clarence Thomas on the Supreme Court, calling him "the most qualified person in America." Thomas replaced Thurgood Marshall, who had been the legal hero to black Americans during the struggle over segregation. Clarence Thomas, the opponent of every governmental program that made his own life possible, is today an embarrassment to blacks in America. To appoint a black man to do the racist work against black people is demonic. Consistent with that pattern, this administration entered an amicus brief against the University of Michigan's Law School because in the quest for a representative student body that Law School used race as one factor in determining admissions. The strange 'Orwellian' rhetoric again was deceiving. "We want America to be a nation where race is not counted for anything and all are to be judged on merit alone." Those are fair sounding words until one factors in centuries of slavery and segregation, or the quality of public education in urban America which just happens to be predominantly black. Next one cannot help noticing the concerted Republican effort to limit black suffrage in many states like Florida where it has been most overt, and to deny the power of the ballot to all the citizens of Washington, D.C. Does anyone doubt that the people of Washington have no vote for any other reason than that they are overwhelmingly black?

Only when I touched these wells of resentment, did I discover how deeply personal my feelings are about the Bushes. I grew up in the southern, religious world they seek to exploit. I went to a church that combined piety with segregation, quoted the Bible to keep women in secondary positions, and encouraged me to hate both my enemies and other religions, especially Jews. It taught me that homosexual people choose their lifestyle

because they are either mentally sick or morally depraved. I hear these same definitions echoed in the pious phrases of those who want to "defend marriage against the gay onslaught." Are the leaders of this party the only educated people who seem not to know that their attitudes about homosexuality are uninformed? People no more choose their sexual orientation than they choose to be left-handed! To play on both ignorance and fear for political gain is a page lifted right out of the racial struggle that shaped my region. Racism simply hides today under new pseudonyms.

I am aware that the former Chief Justice Roy Moore of Alabama, famous for his attempt to place a three-ton monument of the Ten Commandments in his Montgomery courthouse to the delight of southern preachers, is on record as saying that "homosexuality is inherently evil."

I lived through the brutality that greeted the civil rights movement in the South during its early days. Congressman John Lewis of Atlanta can tell you what it means to be beaten into unconsciousness on a "freedom ride." I remember the names of Southerners who covered their hate-filled racism with the blanket of religion to enable them to win the governors' mansions in the deep South: John Patterson and George Wallace in Alabama, Ross Barnett in Mississippi, Orville Faubus in Arkansas, Mills Godwin in Virginia and Strom Thurmond in South Carolina. I know the religious dimensions of North Carolina that kept Jesse Helms in the Senate for five terms. Now we have learned that Strom Thurmond, who protected segregation in the Senate when he could not impose it by winning the presidency in 1948, also fathered a daughter by an underage black girl. I know that Congressman Robert Barr of Georgia, who introduced the Defense of Marriage Act in 1988, has been married three times. I know that Pat Robertson's Congressman in Norfolk, Ed Schrock, courted religious votes while condemning homosexual people until he was outed as a gay man and was forced to resign his seat.

I know that the bulk of the voters from the Religious Right today are the George Wallace voters of yesterday, who simply transformed their racial prejudices and called them "family values." That mentality is now present in this administration. It starts with the President, embraces the Attorney General John Ashcroft and spreads out in every direction.

I have known Southern mobs that have acted in violence against black people while couching that violence in the sweetness of Evangelical Christianity. I abhor that kind of religion. I resent more than I can express the fact that my Christ has been employed in the service of this mentality. My Christ, who refused to condemn the woman taken in the act of adultery; my Christ who embraced the lepers, the most feared social outcasts of his day; my Christ who implored us to see the face of God in the faces of "the least of these our brothers and sisters;" my Christ who opposed the prejudice being expressed against the racially impure Samaritans, is today being used politically to dehumanize others by those who play on base instincts.

David Halberstam, in his book on the Civil Rights movement entitled *The Children*, quotes Lyndon Johnson talking with Bill Moyers right after the Voting Rights Act of 1965 had passed by large margins in the Congress of the United States. This positive vote followed the arousing of the public's consciousness by the Abu Ghraib-like use of dogs and fire hoses on black citizens in Alabama. Klan groups, under the direct protection of Southern State Troopers and local police, had also attacked blacks with baseball bats and lead pipes in public places, which had been seen on national television. Moyers expected to find President Johnson jubilant over this legislative victory. Instead he found the President strangely silent. When Moyers enquired as to the reason, Johnson said rather prophetically, "Bill, I've just handed the South to the Republicans for fifty years, certainly for the rest of our life times."

That is surely correct. Bush's polls popped after his convention ... The combination of super patriotism with piety, used in the service of fear to elicit votes while suppressing equality works, but it is lethal for America and lethal for Christianity. It may be a winning formula but it has no integrity and it feels dreadful to this particular Christian.

Book List

Dubose, Lou and Reid, Jan; *The Hammer*, 2004

Falwell, Jerry, *The New American Family – the Rebirth of the American Dream* 1992

LaHaye, Tim and Jenkins, Jerry B; *The Left Behind series*; from the 90's to present
Congressional Records 1990 ff.

www.morallaw.org for Judge Moore's site



Hear God's eternal rules of life every hour while soft piano music plays in the background. This beautifully crafted clock features hourly recitations of the Ten Commandments. It has a light sensor so the clock does not go off in a dark room.

	Price
Ten Commandments Clock	\$24.90

The light going off in a dark bedroom is handy when violating the 7th Commandment.