Another king which knew not Joseph

by Dr. Greg Dixon

One of the most shocking events in church/state relations took place recently in Pompano Beach, Florida. New Covenant Church, a conservative Presbyterian body, sold some of its land a decade ago to a doctor who subsequently opened an abortion clinic. Members of the church, who believe abortion to be intolerable morally and biblically, began picketing the clinic on a regular basis. The ruling body of the church (known as a session) made it clear that the decision to picket was not officially sanctioned by the church and the demonstrators were acting on their own.

George Callahan, the pastor, allowed Operation Rescue to rent the building to hold a rally. Some of those who attended, including Reverend Callahan, conducted a sit-in at the abortion clinic on March 31, 1989. The clinic, assisted by the local chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW), filed suit alleging that the defendants conspired to illegally blockade the clinic in violation of the patients' constitutional rights to abortions. The court returned a judgment of $1 against the defendants. But the NOW attorneys sued the church under the Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Organization Act (RICO) and won a judgment for $234,000 in attorney's fees. The church has made an appeal for believers and churches across America to send in $210,000 which will satisfy the lawyer, if raised timely.

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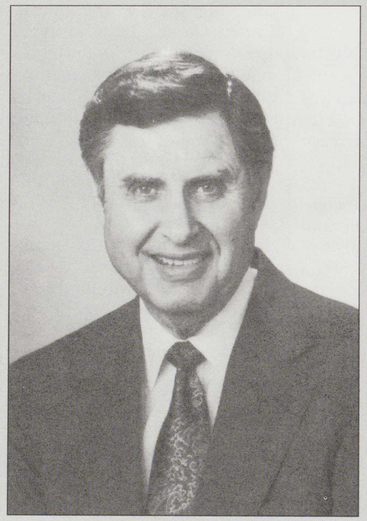

In the first place, be assured that I am 100% behind the church and pastor. From my perspective, this is one of the most despicable acts in recent memory by the enemies of Christ. You can understand why the Lord Jesus said, "Woe unto you, lawyers...". Obviously, this is an example of the American Bar Association's (ABA) attack on fundamental religion that we have heard about for some time now. In fact, the ABA has actually held meetings to teach lawyers how to file torts (liability cases) against churches. It is our understanding that the lawyer in this case had some pretty uncomplimentary things to say about the Christian religion, claiming that it is one of the most dangerous things in the world today or something akin to it. Obviously, the church became the target because it was deemed to have the deep pocket. Ironically, it is said that churches are only interested in money. Some lawyers seem to like the filthy lucre, too. But, as televisions Detective Columbo always says, "There is something that bothers me about this case."

In every article and news dispatch that I have read concerning this matter, it is a church that has been sued. But, it is impossible under our law system to sue a church. The First Amendment and the Florida State Constitution forbids such a thing. It was the corporation that was sued. New Covenant has been holding itself out to be a church when in reality it is a corporation, a not-for-profit business corporation under the revenue laws of the United States. So, all involved can salve their consciences because a corporation is not a creation of heaven, but an earthly entity subject to all of the laws of a secular state, including the RICO law if the courts in the appeals process rules that it does in fact meet muster in this case. You see, the churches of America want it both ways; they want to have liberty under the law of God, but they want not-for-profit gifts (subsidized according to the U. S. Supreme Court in the Bob Jones University case) from a wicked government that allows and finances the murder of little unborn infants. The church wants to suck Caesar's teat and receive blessings from King Jesus at the same time. And this is true of most of the churches and religious organizations in the U.S. Well, now, Uncle Sam says to the preachers of America, "No way, Hosea. If the government is going to subsidize you through tax-exemption? then you are going to dance to our tune."

There is a vast difference between a church and a corporation: note the following definitions:

Church—"In its most general sense, the religious society founded and established by Jesus Christ to receive, preserve, and propagate His doctrines and ordinances."

Corporation—"An artificial person or legal entity created by or under the authority of the laws of a state. An association of persons created by statute as a legal entity." (Black's Law Dictionary, 6th Edition)

In my opinion, the church made three mistakes. First, by incorporating, it took itself out from the umbrella of protection that it had under Christ and guaranteed by the Constitution, which by the way, knocks in the head the advice that all but a few of the "Christian" attorneys have been giving churches concerning "limited liability" under the corporate statute. Next, the church indicted itself by entering into a contract with Operation Rescue to rent them a room. This proved again that they were a "business", not a church. But, here is the kicker. They made a public statement declaring that the picketers did not have the sanction of the church. Then, may I ask, why on earth is the church renting a room to a group whose beliefs or actions they do not sanction? The church clearly gave all involved, including the court, the clear signal that they had entered into a business arrangement, and that there was no religious or biblical basis or conviction to what they did. In essence they threw Operation Rescue, their pastor, and the members of the church that participated in the action, to the wolves; but, unfortunately, it backfired on New Covenant Church.

What is the lesson for the Christian community in this matter? It is time to get our churches unincorporated and become the Lord's church under the Scriptures and the guarantees of the Bill of Rights. Then, we can demand these unalienable rights that our forefathers fought and bled for. Yes, there was a day that our government allowed incorporatedchurches to have religious freedom; in other words, they could have their cake and eat it too. But, unfortunately, "...another King arose, which knew not Joseph." ■

Dr. Greg Dixon is pastor of Indianapolis Baptist Temple of Indianapolis, Indiana.

RU-486 sold under the counter; anonymous Toronto doctor illegally trafficking abortion pill

by Cynthia Fletcher

Toronto, CANADA — The French-made abortion pill RU-486 is being illegally offered to some women in Toronto.

The Canadian Press reports that a woman doctor, who will not identify herself, has been offering the abortion pill as an option to women who don't want to have surgical abortions. She would not say how she came in possession of the drug nor how many women have used it under her auspices.

The pill works by blocking the hormone progesterone which is critical in the development of the baby. The woman takes a dose of prostaglandins which cause contractions and the dead baby is expelled.

Campaign Life Coalition President Jim Hughes said the fact that a doctor is pre scribing the abortion pill illegally does not surprise him at all. "These anti-life people are always breaking the law in order to change it," he said.

Alliance for Life reacted to the news by saying that pro-abortion groups are promoting women's bodies "as the only politically correct place left to dump chemicals." In a press release the Winnipeg-based pro-life organization called on the pill's manufacturer, Hoechst-Roussel, to issue an "immediate world-wide recall of this dangerous 'home alone' abortion method." The press release also pointed out the side effects which include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, cramping and severe bleeding. ■

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