Contrary to what is so often claimed by those who wish to distort history in support of their liberal views, most of our country's founders were openly religious men. More than half had been divinity students. Prayer was integral to their sessions, with a number of recorded periods of devotion lasting several hours or more as they read the Psalms and sought the Lord's guidance. Students today rarely hear these things. In fact, the popular culture twists the truth, claiming that the majority of our founding fathers were atheists or deists. The more we understand about the spiritual underpinnings of America's birth, the easier it becomes to understand and appreciate the precious gift of liberty under God which our founding fathers established for future generations.

The second day of our Washington Briefing brought other examples of boldness. FRC paid tribute to Michael Heath, Executive Director of Maine's FPC, the Christian Civic League. Along with other pro-family leaders in Maine, Michael led the fight for a referendum vote to repeal that state's law which granted special rights to homosexuals. Against incredible odds and with the political leadership of both parties and most of the media aligned against them, pro-family forces scored a tremendous upset on February 10. The final vote was 51-49% in favor of repealing the law.

For the first time in modern America, a state -- a liberal, New England state no less -- has voted to repeal a statewide "gay rights" law. The battle over similar laws in other states is by no means over, but for now the Maine victory means that the trend is running against granting special rights to homosexuals.

It must have been an amazing sight to see Michael and his team of volunteers pulling a small red wagon, filled with over 65,000 signatures, up to the door of the state legislature. Jaws dropped among the media and the politicians when they realized that this seemingly hopeless effort to collect a minimum of 50,000 signatures to qualify the measure for a referendum vote had miraculously been accomplished. What boldness was displayed by our friends in Maine!

Earlier that same day, the participants at the Washington Briefing heard from several members of Congress who, through their boldness, have helped advance the pro-family cause. For example, Rep. Tom Coburn, a physician from Oklahoma, has worked tirelessly to redirect the federal initiative against AIDS toward a more traditional medical approach. For years he argued that federal policies should ensure that mothers of AIDS-infected babies receive early information which could lead to life-saving treatment. After resisting him at every turn, the medical community and much of the AIDS lobby has finally embraced his compassionate approach.

At the closing dinner of our Washington Briefing event, FRC had an unexpected guest, Dr. James Dobson. I knew that Dr. Dobson was coming to Washington for FRC's board meeting the following day, but he surprised everyone by joining us for dinner. He had every reason to call it a day and turn in when he reached Washington, but instead he decided to join in fellowship with a group of his pro-family friends.

As you probably know, Dr. Dobson serves on the National Commission on Gambling. For the previous two days, he had been involved in grueling hearings in Boston that included an oversight visit to the Foxwoods Casino in Connecticut. The Commission was recently established by Congress to examine the impact of America's gambling explosion on communities and families. It has since become clear that the Commission's membership represents widely divergent points of view. Please pray for Dr. Dobson and the members of the Commission that they would be bold in facing their responsibility to get at the truth.

Despite his exhaustion, Dr. Dobson decided to stop by our gathering that night. His attendance proved to be a tremendous boost both for him and for everyone present. After I delivered my concluding remarks, Jim joined me at the microphone to make a few comments and to answer questions from the audience.

It's difficult to convey to you here just how incredibly moving the events of that evening were. When Jim and I finished speaking, everyone in the room stood and surrounded us. They held hands and prayed together for sensitivity, boldness, and strength in the days ahead. As we prayed, we were comforted by the knowledge that, succeed or fail, God would bless our efforts and see us through to the end. President Reagan once summarized the feelings we had that night when he said, **"The question is not whether God is on our side, but whether we are on His."**

The next day, FRC held its semi-annual meeting of its board of directors. We reviewed the progress of the organization, and noted how friends like you have been faithful in supporting our work. We charted our course for the rest of the year, and we resolved anew to continue building on initiatives to protect religious expression and the sanctity of human life as well as projects like our popular student internship program called the Witherspoon Fellowship. FRC is blessed with an outstanding board of directors -- people who serve with boldness because they cherish our nation's heritage of family, faith, and freedom.

Another project our board was excited about is the unveiling of FRC's redesigned and award-winning Internet site. Now, I know that not every American home has a computer capable of connecting to the Internet. But I would like to encourage you to gain access to the Internet at your local library or with a friend and discover the tremendous resources now available from FRC at the click of a button. On April 1, our rebuilt, redesigned, and refurbished Internet site was introduced. It is an up-to-date, easy-to-use reference library that can be reached at **www.frc.org**.

The FRC board meeting concluded in the late afternoon. From there, Dr. Dobson and I made our way to Capitol Hill for a closed-door meeting with two dozen pro-family members of Congress. The meeting was scheduled to last until 8:30 p.m. Well, it ran a little over -- midnight to be exact. Our purpose in meeting with these pro-family representatives was to discuss what Congress might be able to do before the end of the year to help promote family values in a hostile culture. With frankness, Dr. Dobson and I shared our view that the response of today's Congress has not been as strong as the crisis we face. With frankness, the members of Congress responded to our comments. This candid interchange was productive for everyone.

Nearly all the members of Congress who were there agreed that more must be done, and they let us know that they plan to redouble their efforts in the weeks ahead. They also asked for -- and rightfully deserve -- our prayers, support, and encouragement. These men and women are leaders, and we have every right to expect them to lead in the public offices to which they have been elected. But they are also reading the same public opinion polls as you and I -- polls which suggest that the American people are skittish about anything that resembles "public morality." I believe those polls are wrong and that bold leadership can and must change public opinion before this current, destructive trend changes America forever.

Dr. Dobson and I were exhausted as we left the Capitol building that night, and we still faced another day that promised to be equally as difficult. I'm sure you know the feeling as you struggle with your many responsibilities. But as mothers and fathers -- as citizens who love our families, our churches, and our country -- we know we dare not falter. No matter how steep our