

I love the illustration about a man named Jack Eckerd. A few years ago I was on the Bill Buckley television program, talking about 'Restitution' (one of my favorite subjects) and Criminal Justice. Bill Buckley agreed with me. A few days later I got a call from Jack Eckerd, a businessman from Florida, the founder of the Eckerd Drug Chain, one of the largest drug chains in America (second largest). He saw me on television and asked me to come to Florida. He agreed Florida had a criminal justice crisis, would I come down and do something about it? And we did, we got the Attorney General of the state, the President of the Senate, we got on Jack Eckerd's Lear Jet, we went around the State of Florida advocating criminal justice reforms and everywhere we would go Jack Eckerd would introduce me to the crowds and say, "This is Chuck Colson, my friend; I met him on the Bill Buckley's television program. He's born again, I'm not. I wish I were." And then he'd sit down. We'd get on the airplane and I'd tell him about Jesus. We'd get off at the next stop, he'd repeat it, we'd do the same thing again, I'd talk to him about Jesus. When we left I gave him some of R.C.'s [Sproul] books and I gave him C. S. Lewis's Mere Christianity, which had such an impact on me. I sent him my books. About a year went by and I kept pestering Jack Eckerd. And eventually one day he read some things including the story of Watergate and the Resurrection out of my book, Loving God, and decided that Jesus was, in fact, resurrected from the dead, and called me up to tell me he believed that and I asked him some other things. When he got through telling me what he believed I said, "You're born again!" He said, "No, I'm not, I haven't felt anything." I said, "Yes, you are! Pray with me right now." In which case, we got through the phone conversation he said, "I am? Marvelous!" The first thing he did was to walk into one of his drug stores and walked down through the book shelves and he saw Playboy and Penthouse. And he'd seen it there many times before, but it never bothered him before. Now he saw them with new eyes. He'd become a Christian.

He went back to his office. He called in his President. He said, "Take Playboy and Penthouse out of my stores." The President said, "You can't mean that, Mr. Eckerd. We make three million dollars a year on those books." He said, "Take 'em out of my stores." And in 1700 stores across America, by one man's decision, those magazines and smut were removed from the book shelves because a man had given his life to Christ. I called Jack Eckerd up. I said, "I want to use that story. Did you do that because of your commitment to Christ?" He said, "Why else would I give away three million dollars? The Lord wouldn't let me off the hook."

Isn't that marvelous? "God wouldn't let me off the hook." I don't know any theologian who's better defined the Lordship of Christ than that. And what happened after that is a wonderful sequel, and a wonderful demonstration of what happens in our culture today.

We are caught up with this idea that we've got to have big political institutions and big structures and big movements and big organizations in order to change things in our society. And that's an illusion, it's a fraud, it isn't true. Jack Eckerd wrote a letter to all the other drug store operators, all the other chains, and he said, "I've taken it out of my store. Why don't you take it out of yours?" Not a one answered him. Of course not, he'd put them under conviction. So he wrote them some more letters. But then Eckerd's drugs began to get floods of people coming in to buy

things at Eckert's because they'd taken Playboy and Penthouse out. And so People's removed the magazines from their shelves and then Dart Drug removed them from their shelves and then Revco removed them from their shelves and over the period of twelve months while the pornography commission in Washington is debating over what to do about pornography, and while they're trying to come up with some recommendations for the President about what to do which will result in laws which if Congress ever passes them will be sued by the ACLU and will be tied up in the courts for 10 years -- meanwhile, across America, one by one, stores are removing them. And the 7-11 Chairman, who sits on Jack Eckert's board, finally gave in two weeks ago and 5000 7-11 stores removed it. And in a period of 12 months, 11,000 retail outlets in America removed Playboy and Penthouse, not because somebody passed a law, but because God wouldn't let one of his men off the hook. That's what brings change.