



Howard E. Butt, Jr. to Receive First Newport Foundation Leadership Award

The John P. Newport Foundation announced this week that Mr. Howard E. Butt, Jr. will be the recipient of the first Newport Foundation Leadership Award. The award will be presented at the Newport Foundation Leadership Awards Banquet on April 29 as a part of the foundation's *National Leadership Conference on Ultimate Questions*.

John Paul Newport was a Christian teacher, scholar, pastor, and statesman (1917-2000). As a philosopher-theologian-teacher, Dr. Newport taught his students to be synthesizers and reconcilers. Dr. Newport spoke and wrote of the biblical "worldview" before that term became popular, and he sought to narrow the gap between clergy and laity. He dealt competently with biblical hermeneutics, Christianity and the arts, Christianity and the occult, Christianity and non-Christian religions, and Christian apologetics.

Dr. Larry Williams, Chairman of the Board of the John P. Newport Foundation, says, "Howard Butt's life and work exemplify the ideals taught and lived by John Newport. Both Dr. Newport and Mr. Butt, committed to the faith and committed to excellence in scholarship, have sought to make the Biblical worldview relevant in the lives of individuals. Howard Butt is an innovative leader, a businessman, and a spiritual reformer, and we are proud to honor him as the recipient of the historic first Newport Foundation Leadership Award."

As an innovative leader and an early modern pioneer on "faith in the workplace," Howard E. Butt, Jr. is one of America's earliest and most consistent advocates of servant leadership and a widely-heeded voice for spiritual renewal. For over fifty-five years, he has been a bridge-builder and reconciler in the secular and religious worlds. He was a speaker at one of the early prayer breakfasts for President Eisenhower, was named by President Kennedy to the first Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity, and organized the North American Congress of the Laity, whose Honorary Chairman was President Ford.

Forty-five years ago he teamed with Billy Graham in the Layman's Leadership Institutes which subsequently sparked a host of spiritual programs among business people. As a student ten years earlier, he served as General Chairman of the Baylor Youth Revival, which exploded and made Southern Baptist religious history. He was one of the early board members of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and a founding board member of *Christianity Today*.

As a businessman and spiritual reformer, Mr. Butt serves as Vice Chairman of the H. E. Butt Grocery Company, one of the nation's largest independently-owned supermarket chains and as president of the H. E. Butt Foundation, one of the early private foundations in Texas, established in 1934. The Foundation's nearly 2000-acre camp west of San Antonio, Texas, welcomes approximately 22,000 persons annually for two or more nights without charge. Also as president of Laity Lodge Foundation and Laity Renewal Foundation (both public charities), he oversees the administration of Laity Lodge, a nationally-known retreat center in Texas; Laity Lodge Youth Camp, private camping for children ages 7-16; and hosts small gatherings of strategic business leaders, exploring the interactions between management, theology, and behavioral science.

As an author, Mr. Butt has written *The Velvet Covered Brick: Christian Leadership in an Age of Rebellion* (1973, Harper & Row) and *At the Edge of Hope: Christian Laity in Paradox* (Seabury, 1978) with Elliott Wright. In 2001 Mr. Butt compiled a ten-volume series entitled *Renewing the Spirit, Healing the Soul*. This work is based on themes discussed in his 1996 book *Renewing America's Soul: A Spiritual Psychology for Home, Work, and Nation*, published by The Continuum Publishing Group. His newest book, *Who Can You Trust?* is scheduled to be released in October 2004 through WaterBrook Press.

The Awards Banquet will be a part of the Newport Foundation's first annual National Leadership Conference will be held in Arlington, Texas at the First Baptist Church on Thursday and Friday, April 29-30 and is being positioned as something new and different from the rest. The conference will feature some of America's most well known Christian leaders who believe we need a new and different kind of conference.

For information on the Awards Banquet or to register for the Newport Foundation's National Leadership Conference on "*Ultimate Questions*" April 29 – 30, please visit the Foundation's website at www.NewportFoundation.com or call the conference director, Phyllis Nichols at 210-408-1987 or 210-846-4192.

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