



green ribbon campaign

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Introduction to the Green Ribbon Campaign

As the world's leading Christian publisher, Zondervan recognizes that the right to free speech is one of the most important and fundamental rights of liberty. We support the right to free speech in all its forms. We also call for responsibility in exercising this right.

Good citizens know they're accountable for their actions (someone has said, "My right to swing my arm ends when my fist hits your nose"). There are those, however, who tend to forget that they also are held accountable for their words. That's how laws against libel and slander are sustained. Just as in life rules, limitations, and boundaries guard against physical anarchy (e.g., traffic laws, social graces), so too limitations exist to guard against verbal incivility.

Words have a power all their own. At Zondervan we're in the business of publishing life-changing words. Author Tim Stafford, in his book *That's Not What I Meant!*, says, "Words can hurt. Words can heal. Therefore it is of the utmost importance that we pay attention to our words."

The advent of the Internet has seen a staggering growth in the potential for the freedom of speech and expression to people throughout the world. Sadly, in some quarters, this same freedom is being abused and used irresponsibly as a smoke screen to communicate in a vulgar, profane, violent, and insulting manner.

Dr. Alan Keyes, former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations Economic and Social Council, says in his book, *Our Character, Our Future*, "Freedom requires that at the end of the day, we accept the constraint that is required...."

If you agree that the true right of free speech is accurately carried out when self-restraint is responsibly exercised, please display the Green Ribbon for Responsibility in Free Speech on your web site. Thank you.

While the Green Ribbon Campaign wants to thank all those who support this effort, a Green Ribbon icon on a web page does not indicate agreement with the contents of that page or an endorsement on the part of the Green Ribbon Campaign or Zondervan.