



# The Vision

"Mobilizing Pastors Across America"

February 2001

## Monthly message from Pastor Rick

**Rick Scarborough, President**  
**Dave Welch, Executive Director**

### National Advisory Board

Bishop Charles Brown  
*Full Gospel COGIC, New Orleans*

Jerry Falwell, Pastor  
*Thomas Road Baptist Church*

Ronnie Floyd, Pastor  
*First Baptist, Springdale, AK*

D. James Kennedy, Pastor  
*Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church*

Tim LaHaye, President  
*Tim LaHaye Ministries*

Tim Lee, President  
*Tim Lee Ministries*

Peter Marshall, President  
*Peter Marshall Ministries*

Dan Patrick, Vice-President  
*Channel 55, Houston*

Paul Pressler, retired  
*Texas Court of Appeals*

Adrian Rogers, Pastor  
*Bellevue Baptist Church*

Paul Weyrich, President  
*The Free Congress Foundation*

Don Wildmon, President  
*American Family Association*

Not long ago, the church of the Lord Jesus in America was rocked by the revelation of the inappropriate sexual behavior of two of its most visible and vocal leaders...Jim Bakker and Jimmy Swaggert. Both men were discredited and the secular press seemingly delighted in the disparity between their public pronouncements and the private lives of these two men who had amassed multi-million dollar ministries with worldwide television exposure.

The whole matter was tawdry and an embarrassment to the cause of Christ. Godly pastors and evangelists who had committed their entire lives to serving their Lord faithfully, were impugned and diminished by the transgressions of these two prominent preachers. I still grieve over the loss of the mighty and gifted preaching of Jimmy Swaggert, but their fall was necessitated by their shameful sin. While our God is merciful and no sin is beyond His grace, God's servant is required to live a pure and holy life. In addition, the liberal media was more than willing to aid in seeing to it that these men "pay" for their sins.

Enter Jesse Jackson. The Reverend Jesse Jackson who so ably and courageously stood by our disgraceful President during the Monica Lewinsky scandal and reminded us all that God forgives all sin, we now discover was about to be a father of an illegitimate baby while he was counseling the President. It seems the Reverend was having a secret affair himself at the same time. Furthermore, he was arranging considerable compensation for his unwed mistress, enabling her to move 3,000 miles, provide housing and at least \$3,000 per month for child support.

Where is the outcry for his removal from leadership? Where is the righteous indignation of the media elite that demanded explanations from Jim Bakker until he conceded he was misappropriating charitable contributions?

I pray for Jesse Jackson and his family, and I do for Jim Bakker and Jimmy Swaggert and their families. As a minister of the Gospel, I fully understand that all men have feet of clay and that only by God's grace does any man stand. But my point with this article is to underscore again the double standard that exists in the liberal media. The politically correct get a free ride while those who hold conservative values and a Biblical worldview are subject to continual assault.

Beloved, we are at war for the soul of America. The sooner we realize that and prepare for it, the sooner we'll see God begin to move to assist us in taking our country back. Biblical justice must be applied equally for all. There should not be two standards, one for the left and one for the right. But nothing will change until enough moral Americans decide to change it. God, awaken your church I pray.

Amen!

## The Vision

### Contents

Page 2 - Feature Article  
*The Silencing of the Lambs*  
Part Three

Page 3 - Pastors in  
Dickinson, Texas fight  
nude dance club

# The Silencing of the Lambs

## Part Three

### "The Power To Tax?"

By Dave Welch,  
Executive Director

I would like to clarify several issues about this series, and why I believed the topic important enough to devote this much time and space to it. There are differing opinions in the Christian legal community about whether incorporating makes the church a "creation of the state," and whether the 501 (c) (3) non-profit IRS status "gags" the church. What has become evident through the years, however, is that most churches find themselves expending a tremendous amount of time and resources complying with the regulations and restrictions of state corporate law and the "c 3".

First, however, I must issue a personal apology to Pastor Greg Dixon Jr. and Indianapolis Baptist Temple. In the November newsletter I included information about the IBT situation by the author of "In Caesar's Grip" that addressed what he felt were important legal errors in how IBT had attempted to become a "free church". While that discussion may be valid, the language I used in commenting on the situation was unfairly critical of IBT.

The differing opinions on the legal issues should not overshadow the courage of Pastor Dixon and his congregation in their willingness to follow their convictions about being a "state church." They were willing to pay a great price to take a stand against government intrusion into church affairs, and deserve commendation, support and prayers for doing so. We did in fact, earlier last year, distribute a fact sheet prepared by IBT that listed their perspective on some of the legal issues.

My intent in the previous article was simply to present additional information about their situation that raises a different perspective on why, legally, they reached this impasse with the governing authorities. It is not our role to criticize, but rather to inform and encourage pastors to "stand up, speak up and refuse to give up." I fell short of that, and humbly apologize to Dr. Dixon and to our supporters, leaders and affiliate pastors. My concern was and is that many pastors would believe that if they similarly at-

tempted to disentangle their church from the state, similar results would be inevitable. *Since there are many unlicensed churches in America, it is clear that this is not the case.*

Also, I want to clarify that we are in no way criticizing churches that are incorporated. I am compelled to raise this issue only by the reality of how effective the secular humanists and the religious left have been in intimidating the Bible-believing church away from her scriptural and historic role as the prophetic voice of moral accountability to the nation.

This issue is actually fairly simple on principle. A church is recognized un-

**"To the Pulpit, the PURITAN PULPIT, we owe the moral force which won our independence."**

**Rev. John Wingate Thornton**

der the law as essentially a sovereign institution over which the state has no jurisdiction. A corporation, however, is "An artificial person or legal entity created by or under the authority of the laws of a state... (Black's Law Dictionary, 6<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Once incorporated, in the eyes of the courts, a church becomes such a "legal entity" mentioned above. *"The State Street Baptist Church has been in existence for over 140 years. In 1973, the membership organized a nonprofit corporation...once the church determined to enter the realm of Caesar by forming a corporation, it was required to abide by the rules of Caesar, or in this case, the statutes of the Commonwealth of Kentucky." (Hollins v. Marshall, 616 S.W. 2d 801 [1981])*

We are not suggesting that churches dissolve their corporation, but to be aware that its existence does, in fact create legal jurisdiction of the state over church affairs. In the case of the first church in the history of the 501 (c) (3) statutes to have its recognition revoked [*Branch Ministries v. O. Rossotti*, 211 F. 3d 137

(2000)], a legal summary begins with, *"Branch Ministries, Inc. operates the Church at Pierce Creek ("Church")."* The issue was NOT a First Amendment issue, but rather dealt with a corporation that had voluntarily submitted to such restrictions on its political activity via its 1023 application to the IRS.

Which leads us to the issue of the 501 (c) (3). In Branch Ministries, the Second Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals states that, *"...a church may simply hold itself out as tax exempt and receive the benefits of that status without applying for advance recognition from the IRS. Id. § 508(c)(1)(A)."* The court, specifically addressing a "religious organization" via incorporation of the church, still declares that even as First Church Inc., a church is recognized differently than other "religious organizations".

We have posted on our website a comprehensive explanation of political "do's and don'ts" for 501 (c) (3) churches by James Bopp Jr., one of the nation's foremost legal authorities on the subject. That, however, does not address the incredible chilling effect that the threat of losing "tax exempt status" has on many pastors and church leadership.

The power to tax presupposes an institutional authority by the taxing agency over the entity being taxed (*"The power to tax is the power to destroy", M'Culloch v. Maryland, 17 US [1819]*). Our founding fathers, and the framers of the Constitution vehemently opposed any such authority by government over religion, as we will address in greater detail later.

*"To the Pulpit, the PURITAN PULPIT, we owe the moral force which won our Independence", stated historian John Wingate Thornton (The Pulpit of the American Revolution, 1860).*

Would that pulpit have been as effective under the constraints of 501 (c) (3) restrictions?

**NEXT MONTH:**  
**"What Liberals Don't Want Conservative Churches to Know"**

# Dickinson, Texas – Saying “No!” to Nude Dancing

Staff  
Article

Cruising down Interstate 45 toward Galveston from Houston, Texas, it would be very easy to pass the small town of Dickinson without noticing anything except for the exit sign. The business center of this quiet town of about 15,000 residents lies approximately two miles east of the freeway, and probably the most divisive issues in the city were – what else in Texas – football and weather.

That is, until Heartbreakers came to town, opening up a “gentlemen’s club” and bringing nude dancing with it.

It is said that one should not discuss politics or religion in mixed company, but in a struggle to deal with their new “industry,” both have become front and center. The mayor of Dickinson is *Ken Hufstetler*, a dedicated Christian as well as the father of a state district court judge. In grappling with this issue over the past couple of years, Ken has found himself outvoted on the city council, as a majority of council members have not only refused to regulate the club, but recently passed the buck to the people in the form of a non-binding referendum vote.

While nearby Houston and other cities have passed stringent regulations on such things as dancer/patron contact, hours of operation and other court approved limitations, Dickinson had not had any reason to address those issues until Heartbreakers came to town. When the issue was finally brought before the city council, they voted (4-3) to “let the people decide,” resulting in a special election.

As is usually the case, the strip joint

mustered employees, hirelings brought in as a “SWAT” team and a large financial war chest in an attempt to win the vote. Due almost exclusively to the heroic grassroots action of a team led by Mayor Hufstetler, Ministerial Alliance Chairman and Police Chaplain *Norman Trainer*, ad-hoc committee coordinator *Linda Murrie* and the churches in the community, it was defeated by **44 votes out of 2,533 cast**. VA Executive Director Dave Welch provided counsel and guidance on how local churches could be involved, grassroots

**STOP**  
The Proliferation of Nude Dance Clubs in Dickinson!

**PRESERVE**  
The quality of life in our Community!

**PROTECT**  
Our families from the destructive, immoral influences of unrestricted "Sex Shops"

**VOTE AGAINST THE EXEMPTION ON SATURDAY, JANUARY 20!**

**EVERY VOTE COUNTS!**  
P.O. Box 1886, Portland, TX 77380 361-485-6633  
Pamela Rick Scarborough, President

people understood the issue and said ‘No!’ to unregulated adult clubs,” said Hufstetler after the votes were tallied. Trainer, the chaplain for the local police department, credits the Lord and His people, who really responded to the challenge. “This is a family oriented community, and the people are taking their town back,” he said emphatically.

The referendum would have exempted the strip joint from any regulations that might be passed by the city council, rendering any effort to do so moot. The “bad news” is that because the vote

was non-binding, this same city council can still do nothing or pass weak restrictions. “While this was a great victory, it shows that we need more men and women of integrity and character to run for city council,” said Welch.

The good news is that the pastors and their congregations from all over the community came together visibly and actively, to take a stand for morality and virtue. Pastors from many denominations all worked together to achieve this victory; and, in fact, those who led the effort included Assembly of God, Baptist, Catholic and Methodist clergy. These pastors plan to continue this effort by working with Vision America to establish citizenship ministries in each church, and to “dig in for the long haul”.

“This is an issue that demanded the involvement of the pastors and churches of this community”, said Pastor Ware of First Assembly of God. “We realized that if the churches did not speak out, the corruption of this immoral business would prevail.”. Pastor Ware stated that he is committed to remaining vigilant in restoring the moral foundations of the community. “We have realized that citizenship is not a one-time or part-time duty, but requires consistent involvement by God’s people.” Dickinson isn’t prominent on any state or national map, but they have proven that if pastors and their congregations will “Stand up, Speak up and Refuse to give up”, the tide of immorality flooding our communities can be restrained. If enough communities around the nation do the same – who knows, we can even change America.!

Dave,

Thank you so much for your help. I know your encouragement and knowledge in this situation aided in the positive result we saw Saturday. I’m sure you already know we won by 44 votes - close, but a win none the less. I am well aware that this was only the first shot fired but I feel we are better prepared than we were. I think many just have to realize this is a battle. Thanks again for the time you spent away from your family and for the valuable education you gave us. Please continue to pray with us and we will keep in touch.

In Him,  
Linda (Murrie)



Vision America  
Presents a  
**Christian Legacy Tour  
For Pastors and Church Leaders**

*Tour Leaders:*

**Dr. Marshall Foster, The Mayflower Institute  
and  
Pastor Rick Scarborough, President of Vision America**

**April 30 - May 5, 2001**

*"My vision for ministry has been increased, my love for my country has been rekindled, my understanding of the role of pastors in communities has been magnified. My passion to bring my fellow countrymen back to Jesus Christ has been stirred, and I want to share such an experience of personal revival with my fellow shepherds."*

*Pastor David Seifert, Big Valley Grace Church, Modesto, California*

**Walk The  
Christian Heritage of:**

- Norfolk, VA
- Williamsburg, VA
- Washington D.C.
- New York

**The Tour includes National Day of Prayer activities and a tour of the Capitol building!**

*As America enters its third century, we pray that you will join us for this great "pilgrimage" to the historic landmarks which gave birth to America. We do not want you to miss this first-class, unforgettable tour. We have chosen the most exciting and meaningful places that every American should visit. We are going to laugh, pray and share together with true characters and events of our providential history. Together, let's trust God with His promise to us in II Chronicles 7:14 and believe that America can be restored to one nation under God!*

*Marshall Foster*

Hosted by:

**AMERICAN  
CHRISTIAN  
TOURS®**

For a complete itinerary, registration and cost information  
please contact: Debi Fry at ACTS® 800-222-2001

**WE'RE ON THE WEB! [www.visionamerica.org](http://www.visionamerica.org)**



THE VISION IS A PUBLICATION OF  
VISION AMERICA

P.O. Box 1000, Pearland, TX 77588  
Phone: 281-485-6633 • Fax: 281-485-7382  
E-mail: [mail@visionamerica.org](mailto:mail@visionamerica.org)

We believe that if even a minority of the pastors and churches in any community will implement the following program, we can dramatically change the cultural landscape. We can then restore the original vision of our founding fathers for America to be a “...shining city on a hill”!

## **The seven steps of effective Christian citizenship – The *AMERICA* plan**

### **Articulate** *issues from the pulpit*

- Address citizenship and current moral issues
  - ◆ Speak to the crucial moral issues of the day from a Biblical perspective, and why Christians must be active citizens.

### **Motivate** *the congregation to begin taking their civic responsibilities seriously.*

- Most Christians will not become involved in any ministry or take action related to cultural change over the objection or ambivalence of their Pastor. Pastoral leadership makes the difference.

### **Educate** *the congregation on the “Why” and “How” of civic involvement*

- American Religious Heritage, Biblical Worldview, Understanding the U.S. Constitution, and Effective Civic Involvement.

### **Register** *to vote ALL eligible adults in the church*

- If a person is 18 or older and an American citizen – this is not an option! The goal is 100% registered, 100% voting.

### **Income** *the congregation about important policy and moral issues*

- Pending legislation – local, state and national
- Current moral issues – sanctity of life, pornography, gambling, marriage, etc.
- Candidates’ positions on basic moral issues

### **Coordinate** *with other like minded churches in the community*

- Establish and build a local VA Pastor Policy Council to develop an ongoing team that will stand together, speak together and act together.

### **Activate** *the Congregation*

- Create or expand a Christian Citizenship Ministry in the church to facilitate the above activities in an organized manner, and to serve as the church’s link to the Vision America local, state and national teams.
- Fully utilize today’s technology to inform, educate and activate the congregation.
  - ◆ E-mail and fax
  - ◆ Internet based education, training and information
  - ◆ Effective list management



*(Contact Vision America at 281-485-6633 or e-mail us at [mail@visionamerica.org](mailto:mail@visionamerica.org) for more information!)*



## SHOULD CHRISTIANS BE ACTIVE CITIZENS?

*So that government seems to me a part of religion itself, a thing sacred in its institution and end. For, if it does not directly remove the cause, it crushes the effects of evil, and is as such, (though a lower, yet) an emanation of the same Divine Power, that is both the author and object of pure religion....*

*Government, like clocks, go from the motion men give them; and as governments are made and moved by men, so by them they are ruined too. Wherefore governments rather depend upon men, than men upon governments. Let men be good, and the government cannot be bad...But if men be bad, let the government be never so good, they will endeavor to warp and spoil it to their turn.*

*I know some say, "Let us have good laws and no matter for the men that execute them." But let them consider that though good laws do well, good men do better, for good laws may want good men and be abolished or invaded by ill men; but good men will never want good laws nor suffer ill ones....*

**(William Penn , 1682)**

*First, it is their judgment, and that from Scripture taught them, that those who are chosen to a place in government, must be men truly fearing God, wise and learned in the truths of Christ....*

**(Rev. Jonathan Edwards, 1654)**

*It is hoped that but few will think the subject of it an improper one to be discoursed in the pulpit, under a notion that this is preaching politics instead of Christ. However, to remove all prejudices of this sort, I beg it may be remembered that "all Scripture is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."*

*Why, then, should not those parts of Scripture which relate to civil government be examined and explained from the desk, as well as others?...*

**(Rev. Jonathan Mayhew, 1749)**

*Bad men cannot make good citizens. It is impossible that a nation of infidels or idolaters should be a nation of free-men. It is when a people forget God, that tyrants forge their chains. A vitiated state of morals, a corrupted public conscience, is incompatible with freedom.*

**(Patrick Henry)**

*It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great nation was founded, not by religionists, but by Christians; not on religions, but on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For this very reason peoples of other faiths have been afforded asylum, prosperity, and freedom of worship here.*

**(Patrick Henry)**

*The church must take right ground in regards to politics....The time has come for Christians to vote for honest men, and take consistent ground in politics or the Lord will curse them....*

*God cannot sustain this free and blessed country, which we love and pray for, unless the Church will take right ground. Politics are a part of a religion in such a country as this, and Christians must do their duty to their country as a part of their duty to God....*

*God will bless or curse this nation according to the course Christians take in politics.*

**(Rev. Charles G. Finney, 1835)**

*Source: America's God and Country Encyclopedia of Quotations, William Federer*