



# The Vision

"Mobilizing Pastors Across America"

April 2001

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

## Monthly message from Pastor Rick



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Dear Vision America Friends and Family,

John Ashcroft is a great life lesson for us all. Last fall, herculean efforts were made by his supporters to get him re-elected, and many pastors across Missouri encouraged their congregants to get out and vote their values. No one was personally more disappointed than me on election night when it began to appear that he would be defeated by his deceased opponent. In spite of much hard work, great expense and pulling out all the stops, it appeared that pro-life, pro-family efforts had failed.

The next 30 days did nothing to alleviate the pain of the disappointment. I confess my own frustration when Senator Ashcroft conceded the election without a fight, when technically his opponent could not be constitutionally elected because of his unfortunate death. Add to that the fact that irregularities and election code violations were rampant and well documented in St. Louis where his opponent benefited greatly, and you have more than enough reasons to contest the election. Yet, because I know Senator Ashcroft so well, I was not surprised when he quietly conceded the election out of respect for the process and the memory of the deceased. John Ashcroft is the "real deal" and he will not violate his own conscience. He did what he believed was the right thing to do.

Not long after those events, I began to hear that he was being considered for the post of Attorney General in the Bush administration. When he was formally announced as President Bush's nominee to the head the Justice Department, I was overwhelmed with emotion. As God so often does, He closed one door only to open a greater door, not only for the Senator, but for every citizen of this great land. After eight long nightmare years of scandal and injustice, God hand-selected a man who has sought the face of Jesus throughout his public career. To God be all glory!

Were our efforts in Missouri worthwhile? You be the judge. We networked hundreds of pastors in the state. A Vision America of Missouri state chapter has been established, meaning we have an ongoing presence in the state. And a number of important state and local laws are being impacted for the glory of God.

Please remember that when God isn't allowed to rule...He overrules. John Ashcroft has a very clear pro-life, pro-family record as U.S. Senator from Missouri; however, evil forces were at work generating both apathy on the right and outright illegal acts on the left. But God saw the heart of His servant, John Ashcroft, and exalted him to a much higher office.

Beloved, now is not the time to quit, but rather to move forward with hope. We are winning! As always, I am,

Your Servant,

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## Why Vision America? *By Dave Welch, Executive Director*

It has been a long journey from a meeting around a dinner table in Olympia, Washington to an office in Houston, Texas—in fact one that only God could orchestrate. So clearly in fact, that it seemed that this month would be a prudent time to share with our Vision America friends why my family and I have followed a call to this ministry in mid 1999. And just why, from a lay leader's standpoint, pastoral leadership is so desperately needed in the effort to raise the standard of righteousness in our nation.

That dinner meeting in 1985 which involved myself and several other Christian lay leaders from our area led to the formation of a group we called "Thurston County Alliance". It had both educational and political objectives; however the key element was to recruit "ambassadors" from each likeminded church and network them into a team.

The organization never became a prominent factor, but the team that came together did. Out of that effort came campaign, political party, ballot measure and further organizational leaders who continue to impact the state. One of the key elements we recognized was that legitimate political change could only be achieved if the hearts and minds of Christians were turned toward their Biblical citizenship responsibilities. That, correspondingly, would only occur if Pastors were providing the authoritative teaching, guidance and accountability to their "flocks".

I have had the privilege since that time to serve in a series of leadership positions, each moving closer to the call that God has placed on my wife, Valerie, and I— with Ezekiel 3:4-21 clearly given to us as the focal point. Among numerous other activities, I was elected to the 1988, 1992 and 1996 Republican National Conventions, serving as delegation chairman to the '96 San Diego convention.

After years of volunteering "part time" (Val would argue that it was actually my second occupation!), we stepped out on faith, closed our business and began a "full time" ministry career in 1993. The next four years were invested in developing what became—with all credit to the Lord—one of Christian Coalition's most successful state affiliates.

We were called to the Coalition's national office in 1997, culminating with service as National Field Director, overseeing field (grassroots) support. One of the great challenges that we faced even then was the daunting obstacle of encouraging Christian involvement in the God-ordained institution of government over the resistance or around the ambivalence of most pastors.

It became more and more evident that no organization was effectively reaching pastors, very significantly due to the fact that all the organizations were led by laymen and not focused on involving and serving pastors.

It was in summer of 1998 that I first became aware of Pastor Rick Scarborough and his growing national visibility as a pastor who had decided that "Enough is Enough." I invited him to address two national leadership gatherings of Christian Coalition, and it soon became evident to both of us that our mutual vision for increasing pastoral leadership in political affairs and our passion to awaken the church were leading us to work together in his new ministry—one that is "of the pastor, by the pastor, and for the pastor." There is obviously a supporting and important role in this effort for lay leaders (e.g. my position here); however, the command focus is to develop a network of pastors who will stand together and lead their congregations to become "stinging salt" in addition to "shining light."

Moving my family from Virginia

(where after only two years we had become very content to stay) to step out on faith and start a new ministry—again—was not an easy decision. It was however, for us, the only decision. There were national organizations that were filling various needs in "the movement," but there was not one that was focused on developing a pastor-led grassroots network to energize and empower the local churches across the nation.

After devoting fifteen years of my life and many hours away from my family to this cause, I had come to a firm conclusion (in my very limited wisdom but stubborn belief). It was simply this:

A) If the church does not reassume her role as the prophetic voice of moral accountability to the nation, no political effort will make any difference. B) If pastors will not courageously lead their congregations to become involved, very few more Christians will fulfill their responsibilities as stewards of our government. C) Pastors will more effectively respond to a call to action and leadership if it is made by their peers.

Vision America may not be the ultimate vehicle that God uses to accomplish this. Never the less, I believe with all my heart and all that I have learned in local, state and national political involvement over these years that Pastor Rick's vision of thousands of pastors standing together in a real, operational grassroots network is the right plan at the right time to awaken and activate the church.

I am privileged to serve in this role, at this time and with this team. Our prayer is that He will use us to unify the body of Christ across racial, denominational and other lines to turn our nation back to Him. With His blessings and your help, we are committed to paying whatever price is necessary to accomplish that task.

# Vision America of Missouri forms, schedules Legislative Prayer Luncheon

A team of respected Missouri Pastors and leaders met in early March and voted to formally organize Vision America of Missouri, our newest state affiliate. The State Pastor Council includes some of the most prominent pastors in Missouri and crosses racial and denominational lines, including Assembly of God, Southern Baptist, Nazarene, Missionary Baptist and others.

Pastor Jim Carter, senior pastor of First Baptist Church in Ferguson, has graciously agreed to serve as Chairman of VA of MO. He is leading a wonderful state board comprised of men and women who are known and respected all over the state.

State Pastor Council member Israel Groves Jr., senior pastor of Mt. Olive Baptist Church in Marshall, helped coordinate a press conference in Kansas City with other respected black pastors in defense of John Ashcroft's nomination for Attorney General. They strongly affirmed his solid record on civil rights, and refuted the charges that he was either racist or insensitive to racial issues.

Another Council member, Pastor Gerald Davidson of First Baptist Church in Arnold, has a well established track record as a

courageous pastor—even firmly admonishing Rep. Richard Gephardt personally when the Congressman visited on a Sunday morning several years ago.

Pastor John Wilson of West County Assembly of God outside of St. Louis also is well known for speaking strongly to promote pro-family, pro-life issues, and pastors the church that now- Attorney General Ashcroft attended while in state office.



The state team has decided to host the first ever Legislative Prayer Luncheon at the state capitol, inviting pastors from around the state and elected officials on both sides of the political aisle.

The purposes of the event, which will be held in Jefferson City on April 10, are twofold. First is to follow the directive in 1 Timothy 2:1-2 to pray for those in authority by meeting with them personally and building relationship. The second is to show the pastors how crucial their role as opinion makers is in shaping public policy.

We thank God for raising up such a wonderful team in Missouri to add to our growing network of Patriot Pastors and lay leaders across the country!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL 4—Pastor Rick speaks at Revival Fires Conference in Branson, MO

APRIL 5 – Dave Welch speaks at Pastor /Leader Luncheon in Philadelphia, PA

APRIL 10—VA of Missouri Legislative Prayer Luncheon, Jefferson City

APRIL 22, 23—VA “Wake Up America” rally at Hopewell Missionary Church in Corbin, KY

APRIL 30 - MAY 5— VA Christian Legacy Tour from Norfolk, VA to New York, featuring Dr. Marshall Foster

MAY 3—Pastor Rick speaks at a rally in Rockingham, North Carolina

MAY 17— VA Pastor Luncheon in San Diego, CA featuring Pastor Scarborough and Bishop George McKinney

**“All must admit that the reception of the teachings of Christ results in the purest patriotism, in the most scrupulous fidelity to public trust, and in the best type of citizenship.”**  
*President Grover Cleveland*

**EDITOR’S NOTE: The “Silencing of the Lambs” series will resume next month, and will provide more information on how the modern church has unwittingly given up religious freedom to the state. Next month:**

**“LYNDON B. JOHNSON: A GIFT OF RELIGIOUS OPPRESSION?”**

## Special Book Focus

# **Mind Seige:** Collaborative work by two of America's greatest authorities on restoring a Biblical Worldview to America

When asked whether they have read Dr. Tim LaHaye's latest book, it is natural for people to immediately think of the latest installment in the runaway best-selling "Left Behind" series. It is nearly impossible to get on an airplane, or travel at all without observing someone with a copy of one of the New York Times best-selling books in their possession.

"Mind Siege" is not focused on awakening the lost to the coming return of Christ, however. It is another wake up call directed toward the church in this country to counteract the continued erosion of Biblical values in our culture.

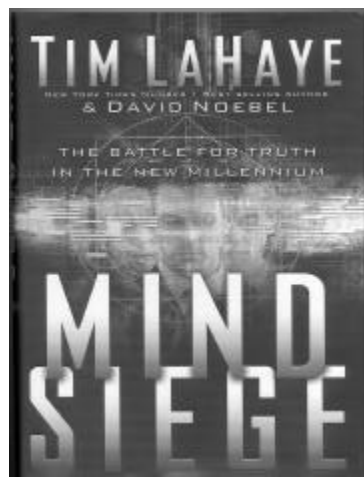
This most recent release by one of the giants of modern Christianity was coauthored with Biblical worldview pioneer, Dr. David Noebel. Dr. Noebel is founder of Summit Ministries, and for over thirty years has conducted Biblical Worldview camps and seminars for youth.

For those like me who were impacted by Dr. LaHaye's ministry for years before Left Behind became such a hit, the content of Mind Siege is familiar. It is essentially an update and expansion of his best-selling book, "Battle For The Mind," published in 1979.

Mind Siege is a MUST READ for any Christian who is concerned about the decay of morality, the rise of anti-Christian sentiment, the undermining of the faith and education

of our children, and other social pathologies dominant in 21st century America.

Let me tease you with content from the opening chapter of the book. *"It is no overstatement to declare that most of today's evils can be traced to Secular Humanism, which already has taken over our govern-*



*ment, the United Nations, education, television, and most of the other power centers of life... The awful truth is that the last major obstacle for the humanists to conquer is the church of Jesus Christ... and they intend to remedy that."*

This book not only documents this reality in great detail, but provides a wealth of information in how to equip ourselves for combating this tide sweeping our nation.

A Sunday School Curriculum based on this book is nearly ready

for distribution, and Vision America is working with Drs. LaHaye and Noebel to get it into as many churches as possible. In fact, Pastor Scarborough has been teaching from this book in a men's Sunday School class this quarter, pending the release of the curriculum.

Understanding the nature of the battle is essential for knowing how to fight it. ***This book should be on the desk of every pastor, pro-family activist and lay leader in the country!***

Dr. Bill Bright praises the book by saying, "The authors skillfully contrast the perfect and always constructive wisdom of God, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, with the flawed and always destructive wisdom of man, as represented by the religion of secular humanism. An outstanding, needed and timely book..."

In April, VA supporting affiliate pastors and Gold Circle Supporters (\$1,000 per year donors) will receive a hardback copy of Mind Siege in appreciation for their support of this ministry. We will also send a copy in appreciation for any gift of \$50 or more during the month.

This LaHaye/Noebel work provides extremely valuable tools for reforming our nation, and we enthusiastically recommend it to every Christian who believes that we have a responsibility to be both salt and light to our world!



### **WE'RE ON THE WEB!**

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