

# March Newsletter

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## Dear Friend of the Family,

As you read this letter and you receive it, my thoughts are, again, will I ever play his final basketball game. Since long before our kids were born, I played and coached basketball and when the boys came along, all three of our boys who could play, did. (I wish those of you who don't know our story, our third son, Lucas, was born with severe disabilities, one left hand and one leg.) But back to basketball - long story short - we've been part of thousands of junior high, high school, and college games throughout many years. And it will all be over in a couple weeks.

This benchmark in our lives has me experiencing a couple different emotions.

On one hand, I wish I were very thankful for the experiences that our family has shared through basketball. The game has helped shape work ethics, improve people skills, and build character. What a blessing!

On the other hand, there is obviously some sadness. Not so much because our family's life around basketball is coming to a close, although that's part of it, but more than that, because it is a stark reminder of how fast time flies. Through the years there are many opportunities to be impacted by the love of God. In those times, we who follow Christ find strength in an eternal perspective the Lord makes available to us through faith. And we find hope in God's Word, which teaches us to look at life:

**"All men are like grass, and their glory is like the flowers of the field. The grass withers, and the flowers fall, but the Word of the Lord stands forever."**

During those moments where a chapter of life is closing, it can also give us pause to evaluate where we are and where we're going in relation to the big picture. Am I fulfilling the calling God has placed on me? Am I investing the time, talents, and resources with which I've been blessed in a way that honors Him? It is good to ask these sometimes daunting questions.

This reminds me of a conversation I recently had with one of The FAMILY LEADER's most faithful supporters. He told me to challenge other donors to not build bigger barns to serve themselves - a reference to the parable of the Rich Fool in the gospel - but to invest generously in promoting Truth, which lasts forever. This reminded me of another passage in Matthew 6:

**"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal."**

Will you join us with your treasures in laying up treasures in heaven? Will you give that our work will bear significant, eternal fruit?

An I write again to update you and ask for your generous support, let me be clear about what The FAMILY LEADER is ultimately all about.

We've covered first and foremost with renewing our culture, understanding that pro-family policies and winning elections, important as they are, will be a byproduct of revival, not the other way around. To renew the culture, we depend through faith in Jesus Christ, on the power of God at work around us. We rely on the leading of His Spirit to help us join Him in the work He has called us to. And we are guided by His Word.



## Incredibly inspiring...

One of The FAMILY LEADER's most powerful events recently illustrated the priorities I've mentioned above.

I wrote briefly in my last letter about the rally we hosted at the Iowa State Capitol, featuring Dr. Ted Turner, author and teacher of Focus on the Family's The Truth Project biblical worldview video series. As I have noted, our rally included such Iowa leaders and representatives as well as the Governor and most of the state's chief justices being given a brotherhood, personalized copy of **The Founders' Bible** - a version of the Bible including letters and articles by historical David Turner. It shows how our founding fathers utilized Scripture in the formation of our nation.

As the time I had wrote you, some of the first state's chief justices showed back to me yet, and one man had completed the video summary of our day on The Hill. You can watch the video by logging onto [www.TheFamilyLeader.com](http://www.TheFamilyLeader.com) inspiringpage.org/legislative-to-illustrate. What incredible images!

When we started distributing Bibles to legislators that day - many of them hand-delivered by pastors or Christian lay people from each legislator's district - word spread quickly through the House and the Senate what was going on. One legislator came out of the chamber and told the people waiting to get his Bible, "I heard there were people out here passing out these really nice Bibles, so I came out to get some!" Thank!

One of my favorite stories of the day is about a legislator and a pastor from his part of the state - both of whom I will long remember here. When the pastor offered the legislator the Bible, the legislator seemed awkward and was silent with the pastor, smiling and then refusing. The pastor decided to follow the lesson and direct conversation away from the Bible, so he started to chat with the legislator about some different things going on in their home community. Pretty soon, after some time and conversation and an overall positive connection, the legislator accepted and graciously accepted the Bible. I only found this story afterwards. I wish I could have been there to watch it unfold in person!

One more interesting tidbit, which indicates to me that God has a bigger plan than we do with these Bibles - as the day leading up to our time at the Capitol, The Interfaith Alliance of Iowa - a congregation of liberal-religious organizations - tried to stop us from passing out the Bibles. They were citing regulations that prevented elected officials from receiving gifts valued at a certain dollar amount.

It turned out to be a big headache about nothing thanks to Chuck Harvey, our legislative team leader, doing his homework to make sure we followed the law. Imagine that... an organization called The Interfaith Alliance being anti-Bible!

Friends, will you join us in praying that these Bibles have a deep and lasting impact on each and every elected official who received one? Pray not only that they would open the Bibles and read the words and the articles included within, but that even the act of our being up at the Capitol and handing them would influence and encourage them.



## Report from The Hill

While we're on the topic of the Legislature, let me give you an update on a few issues we're working on up there.

### Life

House File 18 is a bill in the Iowa House that will require Planned Parenthood and other abortion providers to perform an ultrasound and allow the woman a chance to see her unborn child before an abortion can be performed. The vast majority of women planning to have an abortion change their minds after they see their unborn child. These ultrasound prove that the child is more than just more tissue. This bill is currently in the Iowa House.



Greg, Steve, Chuck & Susan

### Marriage

State Senator Dennis Gath and Representative Greg Howard are providing leadership to defend natural marriage in Iowa. Sen. Howard introduced a bill that a natural marriage provides the best environment for children to be raised. Senator Gath filed a Resolution (RJR) which is identical to House Joint Resolution 4 (HJR). Both bills propose that Iowa be allowed to opt on the constitutional definition of marriage in Iowa.

Senator Gath, along with his fellow Senators Senger, Schick, Chapman, Boardman, Burke, Anderson, Bennett, Johnson, Knappebush and Becklund are sponsors of the Resolution. The three members sponsoring the bill include Representatives Howard, Riedel, Wain, Burk, Wolf, Riedel, Nelson, Gammes, Fisher, Brown, Winkler and Hunter. The FAMILY LEADER commends Senator Gath and his ten fellow Senate Republicans, along with Representative Howard and eleven House Republicans for sponsoring these Resolutions to bring people into State 2013 in Iowa, only one branch of government has been allowed to weigh in with its opinion regarding the definition of marriage-the courts (made up of selected judges).

In our representative Republic, the people retain political power. The FAMILY LEADER believes the Legislature should honor that authority and pass HJR 4 and HJR 4 to the people of Iowa to vote on marriage.

### Human Trafficking

Single you, we are working with law enforcement, civic leaders, and other concerned groups to bring more the most health care in the nation where it comes to our treatment of human traffickers and their captives. Given that two of America's largest industries (H&M and E&E) are through Iowa, human trafficking is taking place right under our noses. The only way to stop this is to create laws that deal severely with gangs and gangs, and then employ law enforcers to do the job. This will be a long process, and the problem is one that we need to do everything in our power to fix.

### First in the Nation

As you know, Iowa is not just at the crossroads of two busy interstates. It's the first in the nation across water. And if you haven't noticed, presidential campaigns are heating up!

The office has been fielding calls from every media outlet imaginable-Fox News, Bloomberg, The New York Times, USA Today, CNN, and the list goes on. They're doing their homework and know that as a potential vice-pres and people like you, will have a tremendous impact on the outcome of the Iowa Caucuses. They want to know what we think about the caucus field. They want to hear what you who supports us are saying. They always ask if we're going to endorse anyone. It's a no-brainer here some days, and the circles have I even had some to vote!

Right now, we are in education mode by far. We're educating ourselves on policies affecting Iowa's families. And we're committed to giving you opportunities to be educated about how to vote that will give our state



## Coming to a town near you

It's a good to get to see our Family Leadership Regional Summits in a community near you to hear from speakers addressing these issues, hear the schedule.

**Mid-Prism - April 9**  
Lakeside Falls - May 16  
Council Bluffs - June 15  
Sioux Center - September

**18** - **21** - This gives you our fourth annual Family Leadership Summit on your calendar. It will be held in Ames on **Saturday, July 18, 2013**. And the Presidential Family Forum will be on Saturday, November 21, 2013.

Our values - the values of conservative, Christian, constitutionalism - must be heard in the process of selecting the next President of the United States of America. Here in Iowa we have a tremendous privilege and a tremendous responsibility to get that. This is going to cost money and it's going to take time - based on thousands of dollars and hours. Please allow me to share with you one more Scripture passage. It's from Luke 12:

**"Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required."**

We live in the greatest country in the world and we are blessed beyond what we could ever ask or imagine. We have been given much. We must love it well.

Please join us with your time, your prayers, and your very best financial gift today.

I hope to see you out and about around the state soon!



**The FAMILY LEADERSHIP REGIONAL SUMMITS**

For the FAMILY LEADER, please send your very best contribution to The FAMILY LEADER within a gift of \$10, \$25, \$50, \$100, \$150, or \$200, using the response form and the enclosed envelope, or go to [TheFamilyLeader.com](http://TheFamilyLeader.com) right now and make a secure online donation. Thank you!

Don Fisher  
President & CEO

**If 7:14 - Lead Ministry Sponsor at RiseFest**

The Family Leader's annual summit, If 7:14, is proud to announce its lead Ministry Sponsor will be "RiseFest" 15th Annual Festival, to be held in Madison, Indiana's Day weekend, June 19-20, 2013. RiseFest is a multi-day, Christian festival featuring several bands including The Newsboys (this year), a kid's live act, and well-known, secular and Christian acts. For more information on the early bird tickets and April 20 use of May 1, before prices will go up.



If 7:14 is a privilege to a calling that Bob Vander Plaats and The FAMILY LEADER look forward to after the 2012 highly anticipated summit when the message was clear. At the summit, speaker after speaker stepped up to the podium and proclaimed that our only hope in restoring through spiritual, financial, health, mental, relational, intergenerational, and personally to America.