

The Spiritual Barometer is Rising!



THE FAMILY LEADER
Strengthening families...

March 2014

Friend of the FAMiLY,

The past month has been a whirlwind of activity for The FAMiLY LEADER, so to catch up on all of it, you'll hear from both of us today: Bob regarding the impact of his travels on behalf of the If 7:14 initiative, and Chuck with a halftime report from our legislative team's work at the Capitol.

Before I (Bob) get into my update, let me mention how blessed we are to have a first-rate team who can "divide and conquer," increasing our output and effectiveness on several fronts.

Without the generosity of donors like you, who provide 100% of our operating budget, we couldn't place our team of lobbyists – ambassadors for Christ, really – at the Capitol AND give me the freedom to travel, speaking and building coalitions with the message of revival for our world.

My hope is that, after you're done reading through our letter, you'll be inspired again to support The FAMiLY LEADER with continued prayers and your very best financial donation.

In my letter last month, I shared with you the amazing opportunities I've been given to meet with influential groups of people throughout the country concerning the topic of my book, *If 7:14, An Urgent Call for Revival*. Those meetings – with the National Religious Broadcasters (NRB) who were gathering in Nashville, with

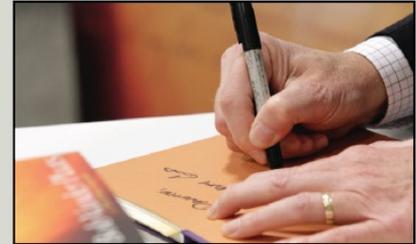
pastors of our nation's largest churches who were gathering in Dallas, and with the National Prayer Committee at the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) who were gathering in North Carolina – were blessed by God and, I trust, will bear significant fruit.

At NRB I had the opportunity to speak, we distributed over 500 books, and we co-sponsored a breakfast hosted by the Bott Radio Network, a group of leading Christian radio folks invested in the call for revival. The positive response was overwhelming, even better than I imagined or could have predicted.

As I was leaving the hotel lobby, I saw a young man who couldn't have been more than 16 years old reading *If 7:14*. I asked him how he liked it. Not knowing who I was, he told me that he had just picked it up and was really enjoying it, and being challenged by it.

Forget for a moment that the kid was reading a book I wrote. What I'm inspired by is that a teenager is excited about revival! May God work similarly in the hearts of other young people...and in our hearts, too!

Signing books and being interviewed at NRB.



If 7:14

An Urgent Call
for Revival...It's Time

"If my people..."

Bob Vander Plaats
of THE FAMILY LEADER

Excerpts from *If 7:14* ~ Bob Vander Plaats

"Of all the words God could have chosen to spur us on to revival, there is none greater than 'if'. The if transitions the weight of responsibility. It encourages personal and corporate responsibility. It demands action, authenticity, and sincerity."

"Jesus is in the multiplication business, which He knows is the exponential factor in bringing those apart from Him to Him. The best news is Jesus makes this available to all, not just to some or a few."

"If we hope to pin our nation's shortcomings on our political opposition and to blame others for our collapsing spin, we have come to the wrong place. We need revival."

Speaking If 7:14 at the Executive Pastors' Seminar, Dallas



If 7:14's call to action is clear: Be prompted to pray two times per day at 7:14 am and 7:14 pm for personal revival, revival in your marriage, family, church, community, nation and world.

At the **conference for pastors of large churches** from around the country held in Dallas, I spoke to a couple hundred people and dispersed approximately 150 books. Again, the response I heard over and over is that this is what this country and our world needs – a fullblown spiritual revival.

If you're not familiar with how we've worked over the years – oftentimes to seemingly no avail – to engage pastors with our message, then you won't fully appreciate how huge it is for us to now see pastors embracing this movement. Praise God!

It's not only pastors, either. In Dallas, some key representatives from a well-respected seminary were very excited about the core message of If 7:14. Can you imagine what would happen if not only more pastors, but more trainers of pastors (seminaries) jumped on board?

Finally, the meeting with the **National Prayer Committee** at Billy Graham's headquarters was a huge hit because it opened even more doors across the country. For instance, among other opportunities, I was invited to speak to a group in Nevada at a meeting focused on... revival.

Are you picking up on a theme?

National and international spiritual revival is on the hearts and minds of many well-positioned leaders around the world. This is not just me or The FAMiLY LEADER. Christians are talking and praying about this everywhere. You begin to get the sense that (surprise, surprise) God is behind this. And if He is, then it will happen.

Before I turn the rest of this letter over to Chuck, let me share with you two ways that you can get more involved in the If 7:14 call for revival:

1. Get a copy of the book and go through it yourself. It's a very quick read. And for more depth, you can even access a brand new study guide online for FREE at www.if714.com.

2. If you want the If 7:14 message presented in your church, please reach out to The FAMiLY LEADER and let us know. We're happy to work with you toward that end in any way that is helpful. Our office number is 515-263-3495.

Please continue to pray and to seek personal revival in your own life.
"It's time!"

Now it's Chuck's turn...

"Urgently we do need a revival of personal godliness. This is, indeed; the secret of church prosperity. When individuals fall from their steadfastness, the church is tossed to and fro; when personal faith is steadfast, the church abides true to her Lord." ~ Charles Spurgeon

Hi all,

Before I dive into my update, let me remind you that there was a time not many years ago when The FAMiLY LEADER was called the Iowa Family Policy Center. I was both the President AND the only staffer at the Capitol during legislative session. In those days a month like the one we've just experienced would have been impossible.

Today we're able to do it because of God's blessing in the form of your faithful prayers and generous financial backing, which has enabled us to grow our staff and expand our reach.

I am so thankful that Bob came to lead us back in 2010 and that he's still here today, especially considering that many good, influential, and wealthy people wanted him to jump into the 2014 U.S. Senate race. Consider that polling data showed he had nearly a 3-1 lead over the next closest candidate in the Republican Primary field. Those are compelling reasons to run.

And don't get me wrong. If Bob had jumped in, I would have supported him. But as he has told me throughout his discernment process, while the notion of running attracted him on some levels, he was never really at peace with the idea. God kept increasing the passion in his heart for the message of If 7:14!

Not only does Bob's being our President afford The FAMiLY LEADER the opportunities he wrote about in the first part of this letter, but it frees me up for what God made me to do...witness to and disciple legislators, staff, and lobbyists at the State Capitol. And we have had an incredible year so far!

I've been at the State Capitol during Session in various capacities for over 23 years. This year there is more Christian involvement than I've ever seen. Is the Holy Spirit the dominant spirit at the Capitol? No, not in the sense that most thoughts, words, and actions are in line with Truth...not yet. But a remnant is rising. Could it be signs of the revival that 2 Chronicles 7:14 speaks about?

I don't know. But I can tell you that we Christians are displaying more diligence than ever. And remember what I always point out from Proverbs 12:24: "The diligent shall rule." Not "the righteous" or "the nice." But "the diligent." Those who stay faithful over the long haul.

Let me give you some pieces of evidence that show that the spiritual barometer is rising under the Golden Dome:



- Attendance at the Tuesday noon prayer meeting, which has been going on for 24 years, is growing. Legislators, lobbyists, capitol staffers, custodians, and everyday Christian citizens are showing up more than ever. In fact, you should consider

joining us yourself (usually in Room 304 in the Capitol.) You'll be inspired and encouraged if you come!

- The weekly Bible Study at the Capitol, which you're also welcome to attend (Thursday mornings from 7:30-8:00 am in Room 103, during Session January through April) is being attended, and sometimes led, by more legislators than ever. Not long ago, Representative Sandy Salmon led a deep and powerful study that everyone in attendance was challenged by and benefited from.
- Half of the people who attended our annual FAMILY LEADER rally at the Capitol were pastors. We encouraged them to individually meet, pray, and share their faith with legislators, and then talk to them about issues of concern. The reason for this? Because ultimately, legislators' hearts being surrendered to Christ trumps persuasion on issues!
- A pastor from an influential church in Iowa met up with our legislative team (Greg Baker, Danny Carroll, Tamara Scott and me) at the Capitol for over four hours one day. After observing our interactions and opportunities, he left more committed to help his congregation and other Christians invest in civic responsibilities from a Biblical perspective.

As far as issues go, we've suffered some defeats, but there are still some opportunities for conservative, constitutional, pro-family legislation to succeed in 2014.

First the bad news. The **Iowa Marriage Amendment**, defining marriage as between one man and one woman, failed again. Multiple bills promoting the **sanctity of human life** were also defeated. And a **payday lending** bill that would have protected the poor and served many Iowa families well, was not brought up by the Iowa House, despite widespread bi-partisan support.

The good news is that the bill banning **telemed abortions** – abortions prescribed and performed in the absence of a doctor – was passed in the House, increasing the chances that a debate on that dangerous and

vile practice will be settled for now.

As of my writing we still have questions about the following issues, which are yet to be resolved in 2014:

- **The gas tax**, which we oppose as it would put further, unnecessary strain on Iowa families (Funding Iowa's roads and bridges is important, but there are better ways to do it than by raising taxes.)
- **Common Core**, a heavy-handed government mandate that will further hurt kids and families via educational indoctrination, is still unresolved. We have great concern around it, and are putting forth much effort to defeat it.
- Other threats to the well-being of Iowa's public school children include an over-broad **bullying bill** and a **band-width bill**, which we are working to amend or defeat.

With the speed at which dynamics change at the Capitol, there is no way for me to accurately keep you up to the minute with a letter. That's why, this year, our legislative team has been providing brief weekly video updates on YouTube. You can find each of our updates, including the most recent one (more recent than this letter!) here.



Please subscribe to our email updates and contact your legislators about the issues described in them. And please keep praying for God's blessing on and continued revival at the Capitol!

One last highlight on the legislative side of our organization... On February 21-22 we hosted another bi-annual campaign academy for Christian men and women considering a run for the Legislature. Former New Mexico Congressman Bill Redmond, who works with CitizenLink, came in to instruct the candidates and their campaign teams. As we say around here, "Personnel is policy." In other words, electing the right conservative, pro-family Christians (the right personnel) will help us enact conservative, pro-family legislation (the right policy.)



In order to continue recruiting and training the best candidates, in order to continue being your voice and endeavor to represent God's voice at the Capitol, and in order to have the continued successes around revival that Bob wrote about, **WE NEED YOU!**

Please prayerfully consider making the very best gift you are able to make today.

And as always, thanks for taking the time to catch up on our work!



For the FAMiLY,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob".

Bob Vander Plaats
President & CEO



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chuck".

Chuck Hurley
Vice President & Director of Family Policy

P.S. Please click here to give your very best gift today. Thank you!

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