

Are Southern Baptists Seriously Going to Exit the Culture War?

In an article in Monday's *Wall Street Journal*, Russell Moore is described as the representative of a new generation of evangelical leaders. After the Supreme Court's decision striking down the Defense of Marriage Act, Moore responded with a pithy slogan, "Love your gay and lesbian neighbors."

Rick Scarborough, president of Vision America Action and an ordained Southern Baptist minister, has taken issue with Moore—the new head of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, the lobbying arm of the Southern Baptist Convention—and his call for Christians to selectively retreat in the culture war.

"I didn't know we were involved in a popularity contest," Scarborough said of Moore's fear that an over-emphasis on politics will alienate Millennials. "I thought our job was to proclaim the truth, not tailor our message to the times. How can we take a soft-approach to a culture that is daily becoming more hostile to the Christian faith led by a political force determined to legislate evil and punish Christians who dissent?"

According to the *WSJ*, Moore acknowledged that "marriage was a bond between a man and a woman but shouldn't be seen as a 'culture war issue.'"

Scarborough explains: "In other words, it's OK to affirm the Bible's message on marriage, as long as we don't defend it. Dr. Moore doesn't seem to understand that Christians didn't choose to engage in a culture war; it was forced on us by those who dominate the culture."

“When the left seeks to nullify the votes of more than 50 million Americans in state marriage referenda, how can we ignore that? When Christians are persecuted for refusing to bend the knee to the gay agenda, how can we answer that with inoffensive cliches? And where’s the Christian love for small business owners who are being forced to close down their businesses just for refusing to embrace the gay agenda due to their deeply held religious beliefs, a violation of their First Amendment rights?”

Scarborough says Moore warns evangelicals against becoming “mascots for an political faction.”

“I agree,” he concludes. “But I strongly disagree that we should not engage strongly and passionately those who seek to dismantle the Judeo-Christian heritage that made America a blessed nation.”