

A New Vision for 2008

God wants to give Christians a new vision for getting involved in the political process.

The start of 2008 causes us to look toward the future. I believe that during this year, God wants to give the body of Christ in America a new vision for getting involved in the political process. As most of you know, I am supporting the presidential campaign of former Gov. Mike Huckabee. My view is that

Huckabee is a godly man with governing experience who has the right stance on the issues.

Thankfully he's surging in the polls. But whether he wins or loses, there must be a new vision that goes beyond this election.

The vision is to create a network that will help put godly men and women into office at all levels of government. The candidates promoted will be those from either political party who walk in integrity and will govern based on biblical principles.

In the aftermath of Watergate in the late '70s, conservatives in this country united. Leaders such as Jerry Falwell emerged, and the media recognized that the evangelical community had legitimate concerns and the ability to swing elections. Today believers are again aligning for political purposes.

What I'm seeing is a grass-roots movement of sold-out Christians who are willing to fill positions of authority, governing with godly principles and gaining experience that lets them run for higher offices. Unfortunately, most are

poorly organized and funded and are unprepared for the difficult electoral process. Though some will win, many won't make it beyond the primaries.

In contrast, citizens who support the Christians' opponents are highly organized and are funding efforts to get "their people" in office. We know this is true of both the gay community and the radical feminists. They not only promote candidates who are advocates of their agendas but also back them financially. One of the best-known support groups is Emily's List. "Emily" stands for "Early Money Is Like Yeast"—it makes the "dough" rise.

It's true that money is an essential ingredient in politics. And the radical left has poured millions into campaigns of those who support their agendas.

Most Spirit-filled Christians, on the other hand, have never donated a dime to a candidate. Why? As I've raised money for Huckabee, I've learned it's because they don't think that what they give will make any difference, their leaders don't encourage them to do it, and they'd rather put their money in ministries.

I've spent my life writing about ministries that are making a difference. But much of what they do is ignored by the larger community—and in fact, certain forces currently in play may lessen their impact over time.

I'm referring to the recent demand by Sen. Charles Grassley of Iowa for records from six well-known charismatic ministries. This demand should be a wake-up call to the ministries themselves and a warning to the larger body of Christ about

the possible repercussions of governmental regulation of church affairs—including the restriction of nonprofit organizations' privileges.

We must act today—so let's get organized! We don't have to stand by and let the ungodly steal our rights.

The movement of social conservatives is much bigger than the Spirit-filled community Charisma serves. But it's time for the charismatic community to stand up and make a difference. Why not work together to get people registered to vote and get them to the polls this fall? Why not meet to see how we can pool our time and resources?

To facilitate the movement, I've started a Web site ([http://www.charisma.org](#)) with a blog and a call for leaders to organize. You can go to the site to find out about meetings we'll hold in various parts of the country. These will be by invitation only, but we are looking for those who should be invited, so let us know of your interest.

The meetings will begin in February, and each will include 50 to 200 people. We are particularly interested in having pastors and other ministry leaders attend.

As I prayed about what to write this month, I realized that I've been called to help bring together those trying to do something in the political arena. We must unite in order to have the clout we need to make changes in our country and in our culture.

Stephen Strang is the founder and publisher of Charisma. To read past columns in Charisma by Stephen Strang, log on at [http://www.charisma.org](#)