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No Room In The Inn For The Baptist Temple

by Dr. Greg Dixon

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn (Luke 2:7). Who has not read these words in stark wonderment that there was no room anywhere in the little city of Bethlehem for the Christ child soon to be born? Would there have been room for Him if the innkeeper had known who was to be born to this unlikely couple? Only eternity will reveal these things, however according to the Apostle Paul, the rulers who were responsible for the death of the Lord Jesus would not have crucified Him if they had known that the lowly Nazarene was "the Lord of Glory." One can only hope that this was the case with this man. But on the other hand, considering Mary's condition, would not the milk of human kindness have been enough for her to be given at least a room in his own quarters. But we should not be surprised, because there never has been room for Him in this old sin cursed earth. Neither has there been much room for those who truly follow His precepts. We must always remember His words recorded by the Apostle John, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of this world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also (John 15:18-21). Our

Lord continued this theme as he instructed His disciples just prior to His crucifixion, "These things I have spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service (John 16:1-2).

This warning was never more apparent than in the way that the congregation of the Indianapolis Baptist Temple has been treated by the Internal Revenue Service and the U.S. Justice Department with the determined aid of the federal courts as they literally stole six million dollars worth of property using the color of the law. The psalmist said that they "frame iniquity by a law" (Psalm 94:20). But now, after literally driving the Temple family out on to the streets, the Metropolitan Board of Zoning Appeals of Marion County (BZA) has turned down a zoning variance by a vote of 3-2 that would have given the beleaguered church a permanent home.

Mr. and Mrs. Linzie T. Brock, long time members of the Baptist Temple, recently made plans to purchase a large vacant building at the corner of Hannah and Madison Ave., right across from the University of Indianapolis, for the purpose of leasing the property to the church. The sale was contingent on zoning in that the area is zoned commercial and a religious use for the property would be subject to a variance by the BZA. However when the variance was applied for, the zoning board, after several delays, voted against the Baptist Temple moving into buildings in spite of a recommendation of their own staff in favor of the variance. Everything was on a fast track for approval until a remonstrator by the name of Gerhard Klemm came forward on the last day that the law allowed for objections. Mr. Klemm owns the property adjacent to the prospective IBT property and was concerned that the use of the land by a church might hinder him from getting a liquor license because Indiana Law requires 200 feet separation between liquor establishments and churches or schools. It might be of interest to our readers to learn that Mr. Klemm is the brother-in-law to Crystal DeHaan of the Crystal DeHaan Foundation who purchased the Baptist Temple property for \$1,500,000, had the church buildings bulldozed down, and established a charter school where the Temple's church school had been.

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Lawsuit Filed By Alliance Defense Fund

A lawsuit was filed in Federal District Court in Indianapolis on March 28 by attorneys for the Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) of Phoenix, Arizona, on behalf of Gregory A. Dixon and Linzie T. and Iva L. Brock against the City of Indianapolis and the Metropolitan Board of Zoning Appeals of Marion County. This action is for a declaratory judgment, temporary restraining order, preliminary and permanent injunction, and damages arising from the City's and the BZA's discriminatorily restrictive regulation of religious land uses in the City. Plaintiff's allege that the City's Zoning Code, both on its face and as applied to them, violates their First Amendment rights to the free exercise of religion and freedom of speech, their Fourteenth Amendment rights to due process and equal protection of the law, the Religious Land Use...Act of 2000 (RLUIPA), and Articles 1, 2 and 3 of the Indiana Constitution. David R. Langdon of Cincinnati, Ohio and Robert H. Tyler of Temecula, California are representing the Plaintiffs and Herbert Jensen of Jensen & Associates of Indianapolis is acting as local counsel.

This may very well be one of the most important religious liberty cases in the history of our nation in that it challenges all zoning laws pertaining to churches. The complaint alleges that the Zoning Code defines "Religion" and that "...a religious use is not a permitted use as of right in any zoning district in the City of Indianapolis. According to Indiana Law religious uses are also permitted in residential areas when a dispensation is given through a grant of Special Exception by the BZA. If it is granted, a church is required not only to conform to all development standards of the applicable dwelling district, but also "to all conditions attached to the grant of Special Exception" by the BZA, including the imposition of "restrictions and conditions which are more restrictive than the applicable development standards of the BZA". Neither is there any legislative guidance given to the BZA that would define the character or limits of those additional restrictions. And to add insult to injury there is no process available to those who wish to establish a church in a Commercial Dis-

trict.

The only other way for a church to locate in a commercial or residential area is to secure a variance. However, there are five barriers that must be met which make it virtually impossible to secure the variance over the caprice of the five man Zoning Board which amounts to an aristocratic dictatorship when it comes to property in Indianapolis.

To demonstrate the long and cumbersome procedure that churches have to meet, the process for IBT to secure this property began on September 10, 2002. The variance request was rejected when the BZA led by the chairman, who attends a Christian Church, voted against the buildings being used for religious purposes even though it has stood empty for a long time. Obviously, the Baptist Temple occupying the space would have upgraded the area and would be a deterrent to urban decline. It is also interesting that the first of the five criteria mentioned above to secure zoning says, "The approval will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community." However, Mr. Klem, the lone remonstrator, doesn't have to get approval from the BZA to put in any number of several types of liquor establishments on his property. Obviously, the present standard for government is, if it's legal it's moral. And yet, very few Christians understand the difference between legal and lawful which is to say biblical.

All Of Society Given Special Privileges Over The Rights Of Churches

When our nation began, our founding fathers made sure that the Christian churches of the nation would be guaranteed absolute freedom to propagate the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Shortly thereafter, the various states did the same, including the State of Indiana, when they came into the Union. But, alas, the churches are now the tail instead of the head. Nothing demonstrates this fact more than the present Zoning laws in Indiana and across the country. The ADF Attorney's argue in the complaint that, "Although the City prohibits religious uses except under limited circumstances it permits, as of a right other uses in numerous

zoning districts. For example the following uses are allowed by right in the various commercial districts including the C-4 and C-5 where the Plaintiffs seek to pursue a religious use: Auditorium; Assembly Hall; Community Center; Multi-service Center; Neighborhood Center; Membership Organization or Club; Civic Club; Funeral Home; School and Educational Service Facilities; Singing Society; Fraternal Lodge; and other uses similar and comparable in character to the above related permitted uses." The Plaintiff's argue that the BZA even makes a distinction between religious and non-religious assembling. They also make the point that the BZA laws are not even neutral or of general application as the Supreme Court has interpreted the First Amendment in the past. The point is also made in the suit that religious speech is treated at a lower priority than all other speech. This means that at most of the above type of assemblies even blasphemy would be permitted; but assembly that is designed for words of praise to God is prohibited by current law. Another point that is made with great clarity is that the Zoning laws create an unconstitutional prior restraint. This is consistent with the famous Murdock case where a city in Pennsylvania demanded a license in order to sell religious books. Another serious encroachment on religion is the fact that these laws prohibit the right of association. It's all right to associate with drunkards in a liquor establishment but it is illegal to associate with sober folks at church.

The City Of Indianapolis Order's IBT Mission Church To Vacate Also

In spite of the fact that their own property was seized illegally by Federal Marshal's on February 13, 2001, the congregation of IBT has monetarily and physically built four churches on the mission fields of Honduras, Haiti and Mexico. The church has also started a Hispanic and black church in Indianapolis. It has also founded an inner city church called Crown Of Life Baptist Church that is pastored by Greg Dzula. The church, which is located at Rural and Washington Streets, received a letter from the City of Indianapolis on March 5 stating, "The location and operation of a church in a commercial dis-

tract is not permitted. Either vacate the structure or obtain a Variance of Use." Also according to the letter, if the Church does not vacate the Washington Street property, or if a Variance of Use is not obtained on or before March 20, 2003, the City intends to take further enforcement action. At the same approximate time, there were eight other inner city churches that received the same type of notice. It is obvious that the city would rather these buildings rot to the ground than have churches remodel and clean them up, which is a boon to the neighborhoods both physically and morally, than to lose their ability to dictate the use of these properties. Apparently it is of little concern to the BZA and city fathers that this drug-infested area is vastly improved by the presence of these churches. Crown of Life is not named as a part of the lawsuit because the owner has applied for the permit. That bridge will have to be crossed if the variance is denied, but in the mean time let us never forget what U.S. Attorney Robert Metzger said before the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals in the IBT case: "An uncontrolled church is untenable in society today."

Some of us have tried to warn the churches for years that this would be the final end to this one hundred year stint of operating as businesses by means of incorporation and other legal trappings, but few have listened. If a bride begins running with harlots, it won't be long until she is treated as one. How can the churches of America expect the favored treatment and protection that the federal and state constitutions guarantee if they flaunt this envied protection to crawl in bed with government for provision and protection that has been promised to them by God? During the attack on IBT, the spokesperson for the IRS said that they treat the Indianapolis Baptist Temple just like any other business. In other words, businesses pay taxes so why shouldn't the religious business. Now with these repressive zoning laws **they** are treating churches even less than businesses.

The Tip Of The Iceberg

The zoning crisis in Indianapolis is but the tip of the iceberg nationally. The Trumpet reported a few years ago about the

case in Evansville, Indiana, where a church was being denied the right to have a prayer meeting. In fact, one person in city government told the pastor that they had driven past the church and saw their sign advertising a prayer meeting. In essence, they had turned law enforcement that is supposed to be Peace Officers into the "prayer police." Thankfully, the church won their case in court but no one ever thinks about the cost in time and money that could have been used for the spreading of the gospel of Christ. But, this is typical of hundreds of these cases that are simultaneously taking place all over America. One of the most celebrated cases was the church in California that recently bought property to relocate. After raising several million dollars and jumping through all of the hoops, the City denied the zoning because they did not want to lose the tax base. Another case in point is a small church east of Indianapolis that began having services in a residential area. The city drove them out because it wasn't zoned for religion. The church, for whatever reason, not wanting to fight the issue simply moved to the country. At that point, the County drove them out because they were in an area zoned for farming not religion. Finally, the pastor disbursed the church and moved to Ohio.

Zoning Laws A U.N. Plot To Destroy All Local Churches

Few people ever want to believe that there is a conspiracy against God and His people. But this Satanically devised plan to thwart the program of God has been going steadily forward ever since the garden of Eden and will come to a head in the final world political, economic, and religious system headed up by the Anti-Christ and False Prophet. It was predicted at Genesis 3:15 with these words, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." What many believers fail to understand is that Satan will bruise the heel of Christ and will also bruise many of His followers along the way.

"U.N. Targets Local Churches For Eradication," this was the heading on a 17 page report prepared by The Christian ALERT Network (TCAN) of Killeen,

Texas, warning the pastors and churches throughout the entire world of the insidious goal of the United Nations to literally eliminate all local churches by whatever name or doctrinal persuasion. This means that the U.N. has literally declared war on all religions and especially Christianity. One of the main weapons of the U.N., according to the report, is to use zoning and other regulatory laws already in place to simply either regulate or zone local churches out of existence. (For the complete report at no charge contact us by mail, e-mail or phone).

We should all pray earnestly that this case will be won in favor of religious liberty and that the congregation of the Baptist Temple will be able to have a permanent place to worship after these many months. It hasn't been easy renting the Emmerich Manual High School Fine Arts Auditorium in the winter and Jonathan Byrd's Convention Center in Greenwood, Indiana, in the summer and other church auditoriums and motel swimming pools for baptismal services. They are certainly learning the meaning of the blessed scriptures that say, "Let us go forth therefore without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come." (Hebrews 13:13,14)

DOUBLE VICTORY FOR THE BAPTIST TEMPLE

We have just learned that on May 20th the city of Indianapolis agreed to settle the lawsuit brought against them by the Brocks and Pastor Dixon in favor of the church. The city will give the Brocks the zoning variance for the property that they seek to purchase with no strings attached. The agreement also means that the church can oppose a liquor license if Mr. Klemm should seek one in the future. They also will recommend that the City-County Council of Indianapolis amend their zoning laws, which discriminates against churches. The city also agreed to pay all attorney fees for the Alliance Defense Fund and court costs. On the same day the Metropolitan Board of Zoning Appeals in less than five minutes approved a variance for the owners of the property where the Crown of Life Baptist Church meets.

ATTORNEY GENERAL JOHN ASHCROFT SAYS HE ORDERED THE RAID ON THE BAPTIST TEMPLE - IMPLIES THAT THE CHURCH IS A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION!

By Dr. Greg Dixon

There has been virtually no media attention concerning the shocking remarks made by Attorney General John Ashcroft at the swearing in ceremony for Benigno Reyna, the new head of the U.S. Marshals Service, on December 5, 2001 in Arlington, Virginia. We feel that in the light of recent legislation and what is still planned in the future for the citizens of our country, that our readers would be interested in what our government considers terrorists to be. This should be true especially in the light of the Patriot Act I and the Domestic Security Enhancement Act of 2003 (SB22) which is in committee at the present time and, which according to many constitutionalists, makes terrorists out of a large segment of American society. We also feel that it is important for the following information to be kept before the public and in particular the Christian community. Following are the pertinent excerpts from Mr. Ashcroft's speech that was carried live at approximately 3 p.m. over CNN and Fox News Network. (*The words in bold caps and italics are mine for emphasis*).

"And it's a pleasure to stand next to and with men and women whose responsibility, ambition, duty and opportunity it is to reinforce the framework of freedom: that's the rule of law that characterizes the United States of America. I am honored to be with you. I am honored to work with you and to serve you.

"Director Reyna, when I next speak to the President, it will be my very happy pleasure to report that the leadership team that he selected for the federal law enforcement of the United States of America is now offi-

cially installed. And what a team it is. I'm glad you are a part of it. And I particularly want to thank the chief of staff of the President of the United States, Secretary Card, for being here with us today. Would you mind standing up so I can applaud you...

"As the Marshal Service Director, Ben Reyna, will stand with the men and women of the Marshal Service on the front lines of the war against **terrorism**. Just as our service men and women are risking their lives in the battle against the enemy overseas (*referring to our troops in Afghanistan in their effort against the 911 terrorists*), it falls to those of us who are here at home in law enforcement to lead in America the battle against the **ENEMY AT HOME**. **The fight against terrorism and the preservation of innocent lives from terrorist threat is now the first and overriding priority of the Department of Justice**. And even though the federal justice system today is more complex than it was when President Washington appointed the first 13 U.S. Marshals, our mission must be equally clear. Over the centuries, carrying out that mission has required new ways of doing business.

Now when terrorism threatens our future, we cannot afford to live in the past. We have to embrace the future and our core mission of protecting the nation and the citizens of our nation.

Yes, it is a huge undertaking, but this department can change when necessary and adapt (and it can do so while it maintains high standards) safeguards that are essential to the democracy in which we live. The men and women of this particular agency, the U.S. Marshal's Service, are among the finest law enforcement officers in the world. But the federal government cannot win this battle alone. We must forge new relationships of trust with our partners in state and local law enforcement."

The rest of Ashcroft's speech was taken up with more personal praise of Reyna and then he finished with this bombshell:

"And I would just add that since I became attorney general, I've had numerous opportunities to witness the truth of your message. For example, when I came on board last winter, the first Department of Justice operation conducted on my watch was for the department to seize the assets of an organization known as the Indiana (sic) Baptist Temple. It was a Marshal's Service assignment. The men and women of this agency worked patiently; they worked professionally with other law enforcement officials, with the media, and with church leaders to resolve some very thorny issues, not the least of those issues was the threat of armed militias and **VIOLENCE**.

This organization, you, the Marshals Service, **DEFUSED A POWDER KEG SITUATION**. You accomplished your

mission, and in doing so, you earned the gratitude of a nation that knows the value of professionalism and dedication in law enforcement. That success helped me start my job on the right foot, and I'm not likely to forget it."

You will note that Mr. Ashcroft said that this was his first act after taking office in January of 2001. He had been in office only one week. The Clinton/Reno Administration had precipitated this persecution against our church but had not moved on the church for more than eighty days. Why wasn't Mr. Ashcroft willing to try and work things out, which he had every legal right to do? How could he have possibly known anything about the pastors and congregation of the Baptist Temple in just one week with all of the other duties and housekeeping responsibilities that come with moving into a new job, etc.? The answer obviously is simple; he couldn't have known anything except what his advisors told him about the situation. Apparently, they led him to believe that the pastors and members of the Baptist Temple were terrorists and a threat to do physical harm to the Marshals assigned to seizing the church property. They led him to believe that we were domestic enemies just as the Al Qaeda terrorists that our soldiers were tracking down overseas. Obviously, he was told that we were the "militia" and that we had arms and was a threat to use violence against the marshals. His advisors had told him that the situation in Indianapolis was a "powder keg" that they had to defuse. In that Mr. Reyna was in a high position in the marshal's office during that time, he apparently was one of them that participated in briefing Ashcroft on this matter.

This occasion was not the first time that Mr. Ashcroft had shown his gratitude to the Marshal's service. On February 13, 2001, the night of the raid, Mr. Ashcroft called Marshal Frank Anderson at a Pacer's basketball game and thanked him personally for leading the successful raid on the church. Apparently, he felt relieved that the Bush ad-

ministration wasn't saddled with the opprobrium of a Waco even though there was never such danger. It also shows that Mr. Ashcroft was personally responsible for the seizure of our property. It also confirms what Debbie Westbrook, who was the chief counsel to the Marshals Service at the time of the raid, told our Attorney, Mr. Al Cunningham. She said that the raid could have never come down without the personal approval of John Ashcroft.

It is obvious that anyone that the government wants to destroy whether here or abroad must be vilified in the press to get public opinion against them before the government destroys them. It is also consistent with what U.S. Attorney Doug Snoeyenbos told Mr. Cunningham during the court proceedings. On one occasion, he said that he had been a justice department attorney for eleven years and usually handled his own cases but this was the first time that the "higher-ups" were looking over his shoulder. On another occasion, he said that the "higher-ups" were determined to totally destroy Dr. Greg Dixon and the Indianapolis Baptist Temple.

Is not Mr. Ashcroft's statement about cooperation between "other law enforcement officials, with the media, and with church leaders to resolve some very thorny issues" revealing? We should not be surprised at rapport between law enforcement agencies, but did the media and local clergy counsel with the Marshal as to how to bring down the Baptist Temple? We believe that they did. In fact, we felt all along that there were those in the media that were informers for the authorities. And apparently there were some of the state preacher boys who the Marshal used for advice. The state preachers have always carried the favor of the state through being informers and an encouragement to the wicked acts of state officials. We will always be grateful to Sheriff Jack Cottey for refusing to allow his department to participate in the raid, although he was asked to by the Marshal's office.

Mr. Ashcroft's actions are consistent with his testimony before the Senate Ju-

diciary Committee on confirmations when he said that he would not allow his personal faith to conflict with his duties as Attorney General. Mr. Ashcroft proves by this incident that the laws that someone in this office, state or federal, is expected to enforce at the present time in the U.S. could never be carried out as a Christian or for that matter anyone with principle. It also shows a misunderstanding on the doctrine of government as revealed in the scriptures. When Saul gave the order for his soldiers to kill his son Jonathan for eating without permission, they refused to do so and saved Jonathan's life. What a fresh breath of freedom would have blown through this nation if the Attorney General, Marshal Frank Anderson, and all of those marshals and policemen who carried out the raid would have simply said we won't raid a church.

But since taking office Mr. Ashcroft has done more than just order a raid on a church. He has unleashed the wrath of the U.S. government against anti-abortion protestors even in their peaceful efforts to save babies. And even though he has refused to meet with a group of unregistered church pastors, he has opened the doors of his office to large numbers of sodomites.

In our opinion, John Ashcroft will go down in history as one of the greatest enemies of the church in the history of the world in spite of the fact that his father was an old time Assembly of God pastor and that he is a lay preacher and sings regularly in churches across the land. When he was a U.S. Senator along with former Senator Dan Coats from Indiana, Mr. Ashcroft was the architect of the Faith Based Initiative, which legalized the social gospel and outlawed the old time saving gospel of Christ. In the end, this direct flow of funds into the coffers of the churches of America will do more harm than open persecution.

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. John 8:32

TAXATION AND THE LORD'S CHURCH

By Dr. Greg Dixon

Several years before his death in 1976 and long before there emerged the type of persecution of churches and their ministries in America by the government as is now so visible, Baptist Evangelist B.B. Caldwell made the following prediction in a sermon entitled, "Seven World-Shaking Events Soon to Come to Pass."

"I predict that the final oppression of Christianity will start with taxation...there will be universal taxation. This will start with a series of independent churches and missionary associations, thereby casting a shadow upon their integrity and raising doubts in the minds of their contributors as to the validity of their ministry. The government will haul ministers of the Gospel into court on alleged tax irregularities and challenge ministerial authority of independent ministers of the Gospel. The government will get rid of independent ministers, churches, and associations, and a state church will be set up."

Notice, in this prediction, the connection between taxation and a state church. We are sad to say, but the danger of such a state church is now a reality because many preachers and laymen in the U.S. either do not know what a state church is or do not care. David Gibbs, Founder of the Christian Law Association (CLA), stated to a group of preachers many years ago that there is "probably a wide-spread feeling that state church implies uniformed guards conducting church services. And because that seems so unlikely, the fear of a state church is often minimized."

Little did Brother Caldwell know that just two years after he made those prophetic remarks that Jerome Kurtz, then commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service, would give a speech in January of 1978 in the state of New York in which he gave for the first time a definition of a church in the history of the United States of America. In that speech he announced the fourteen point criteria of which the first demands that all churches must have a "distinct legal

existence." In the CLA publication *The Legal Alert* of April 1998, Attorney Gibbs follows this IRS definition of a state church in an article entitled, *Will Churches Remain Tax-Exempt In America?* He said, "THE ORGANIZATION MUST BE A FORMAL ORGANIZATION. This means the church must organize as a trust, an unincorporated association, or a corporation..." Practically 100% of the lawyers and accountants in America follow this definition of a church today. In other words, a church must be a legal entity. This is in total violation of the Scriptures, the U.S. and all fifty State Constitutions in our nation, and the weight of church history, in particular, Baptist history. At the point of the church becoming a legal entity, it would automatically become a state church subject to the rules and regulations of the state which is its creator and IRS Publication 1828, its rule of faith and practice rather than the Holy Scriptures.

For the purpose of this article, two examples will suffice. Some years ago I was asked by a pastor to attend a court case in a small town in Southern Indiana. A local Baptist church had disciplined some members, and they were suing the pastor (not the church) for reinstatement into the membership. The first question the judge asked the pastor's lawyer was whether the church was incorporated? When the lawyer said no, I breathed a sigh of relief until the judge asked if the church operated with a constitution and by-laws and the answer was yes. Then he asked if they operated with Trustees and the answer again was yes. At that point, the judge said that he would take jurisdiction over the case. Because of these state documents and officers, the church was operating as a legal entity known under state law as an unincorporated association, not a New Testament church under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ pursuant to the Holy Bible. In fact, the pastor found that out rather quickly when he stood to his feet with a large

open King James Bible in his hands and started to read out loud to the court. The judge quickly interrupted him and said, "Pastor, I have great respect for the Bible, but we are not here to discuss the Bible, but rather the statutes of the State of Indiana and the Constitution and by-laws of the church. Needless to say, they hadn't obeyed the guidelines for dismissing members based on those documents rather than the Scripture, so the dissidents ended up with the church property and the pastor along with the truly good folks of the church found themselves standing on the outside.

Another interesting case was the black preacher in a southern state that called me and asked me to come to their court proceedings. This also involved the dismissal of several dissidents from the membership. In this case, the malcontents sued the church or rather the corporation. This was the celebrated case where the judge had placed a Jewish attorney to preside over the business meeting of a black Baptist church which was quite offensive to the congregation. When I got into the picture, the case had proceeded to the point where there was a hearing to determine whether the pastor was to be put in jail for contempt for refusing to give the membership list to the court so the attorney could inform the members of a business meeting to reinstate the members. The preacher was steadfast in his refusal to give up the list. William Kuntsler of the infamous Chicago Seven was the lead counsel for the church. At breakfast early that morning, I had given "Bill" a crash course on Baptist doctrine. However, the judge wasn't interested in Baptist doctrine but rather the laws pertaining to non-profit organizations. The judge said, "Counsel, has the pastor brought the membership list for the organization?" Kuntsler said, "No, your honor." Sitting right behind the attorney and the preacher I whispered, "Bill, a Baptist church is not an organization but an organism." Like a flash Kuntsler was on his feet and said in the long drawl of an

accomplished orator with the proper gestures, "Your honor, a Baptist church is not an organization but an organism." The judge said, "Nice try, Counselor, but the record shows that this Baptist church is organized as a corporation, therefore, it has waived its Constitutional guarantees to operate according to their interpretation of the Scriptures. Then he mentioned an astounding premise in American jurisprudence. He said that in that the church was organized as a corporation under state law, therefore, the church was a democracy and each member had the rights of the whole. All of a sudden, I realized that the judge was giving us a lesson in American law. A democracy is the one-man-one vote concept where a republican form of government is a representative form of government, where the wisest of men are to be chosen by the people to represent them. And a Christian republic, which America was in the beginning, was to be represented by these men on the basis of our Constitution, which was based on the laws of God. One is a mobocracy and the other an indirect theocracy.

The pastor still refused to give up the records even though he had no Constitutional or biblical ground to stand on. It was an ominous sight as I saw him take his billfold and other things out of his pockets, give his watch to his wife, and put his hands behind his back waiting for the cuffs to be applied. I will never forget the tears of his wife and family as he walked off to a jail cell. But the end of the story was the saddest. The preacher finally gave up the records. They had their business meeting and the first order of business was to vote the pastor out, and the next thing they did was to vote the dissident members back in. This was at least fifteen years ago, and the preachers of America are still sound asleep as they were then.

But history reveals that a state church operates with more deception than the state coming in with armed guards as Gibbs mentioned.

All of society given special privileges over the rights of churches

Historically, the state has considered itself as benevolent, accommodating, and wise in its relationship to its controlled churches. Even in the Soviet Union before the new lessening of tensions, the church was tolerated for show as long as it conformed to state guidelines. In fact, they called them "show churches." One of those was the First Baptist Church of Moscow. In the early eighties, Edward Simcox, who at the time was Secretary of State of the State of Indiana, went to Russia as a guest of the government. I invited him to speak to our Auditorium Bible Class at the Indianapolis Baptist Temple upon his return. Following are the nearly unbelievable things that he revealed. He said that he attended the large First Baptist Church of Moscow, which was packed out. He told how blessed he was to hear the strains of the old songs of the faith which he recognized even though he couldn't understand the words. He said that he was blessed by the simple gospel message that was preached and especially blessed by the communion service at the close. The he told of a beautiful wedding that was conducted before the crowd was dismissed. Of course, there were many hearty "amens!" from our folks. Then he dropped a bombshell. On the way back to his hotel, his host asked him how he enjoyed the service, and, of course, he told of his joy in being in such a wonderful atmosphere. Then he was asked if he knew who preached the sermon, served communion and conducted the wedding? Naturally he said no. Then his guest revealed to him that each of those men were KGB agents. They were there to keep the people under control and to make sure state approved sermons came from the pulpit.

There is no difference except in degree in America today. In order to get benefits from the state in tax deductions and tax-deductible gifts, the pastors have agreed to espouse Federal Public Policy. A leader in a church in northern Indiana told me recently that four preachers who had come to candidate for the church told the congregation that they can't preach against the govern-

ment. A Southern Baptist pastor told one of his assistant pastors recently that he couldn't conduct a class on Bible prophecy because it might jeopardize their tax-exemption. James Dobson announced on his international broadcast a few months ago that because of their tax-exempt status he was limited as to what he could say in the legislative area. He has a battery of lawyers that keep him on the straight and narrow in this regard. Anytime a preacher goes to the pulpit for weeks on end and says nothing about current events in the light of the Scriptures, you are hearing a preacher that has hushed his mouth as a prophet for hush money, tax-exemptions. Now with President Bush's Faith Based Initiative, it is even worse especially the multi-million dollar ministries. Untold thousands of these have already gone to the trough for direct government subsidy or are waiting to be approved. Do you think these palace preachers are going to say anything negative about the present administration? No wonder Isaiah the prophet said, Isaiah 56:10-11,

10. "His watchmen *are* blind: they *are* all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.
11. Yea *they are* greedy dogs *which* can never have enough, and they *are* shepherds *that* can not understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter."

Before dealing further with the matter of taxation itself as a key element in the state church, let's pause a moment to consider other dangers of a state church. It was the state church that brought on the dark ages, called by some the "Devil's millennium." It was a state church against which Luther stood when he nailed his thesis to the Wittenburg church door. It was a state church that threw Bunyan in Bedford Jail for nearly fourteen years. It was a state church that slaughtered the Scottish Covenanters, hunting them down like dogs, and hoisting their bleaching skulls on cruel spikes at Edinburg.

But the danger of a state church is not only in its benevolent toleration of

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2. The Trumpet without apology will present the historic Baptist position on all subjects. We are fundamental in all of our doctrinal positions including the inerrancy of the Scriptures. Eschatologically, we are Pre-millennial. However, we will not hold all contributors or source material responsible to agree with us on all points.

3. The Trumpet will vigorously contend for all of the biblical positions regarding faith and practice in the area of morals, culture, economics and government.

4. The Trumpet will stand vigilantly for the separation of Church and State especially as it is stated in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and the various state constitutions.

5. The Trumpet will oppose all worldliness, denominationalism, ecumenicalism, socialism, communism and compromise as promoted by the modern day state church.

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its controlled puppet churches, it is also the uncontrolled wrath which it lashes out against those who dare to oppose this state version of religion. This is the Satanic Spirit that triggered the Spanish Inquisition.

But what man chooses for evil, God chooses for good. It is still true that the blood of the martyrs is still the seed of the church. State persecution burned a fire into the heart of Northern Ireland that has not gone out in 200 years. It drove our forefathers to these shores at great peril for their lives. Even after they came, it took the State Bill of Rights to finally stamp out a version of the state church even in the colonies. In some ways, a state church is worse than no religion at all. Virgin territory seems to respond to the gospel call more than the fallow ground of state religion.

Today America's state religion of Secular Humanism, which is Cain's religion that denies the saving blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, is emerging as the only approved religion, and the only one legally taught in the public schools of the land.

Historically, there were three things that characterized a state church. Everything in the land which called itself a church had to have these three elements: (1) approval (see IRS Publication 1828 at www.irs.gov <<http://www.irs.gov>>) (2) subsidy (tax-exemption and tax deductible gifts). A little money has always been the bait for more controls. The Supreme Court made it crystal clear in the Bob Jones Case - Tax-exemption is government subsidy. The old axiom has always been true, "Come Shekels, come Shackles." The third element is taxation.

In Indiana, they are paying sewer taxes; in Florida, they are being forced to pay a school tax to support unimaginable wickedness. In fact, many of the churches have their own schools at great hardship and sacrifice and still pay for the teaching of evolution, humanism, socialism, immorality such as sex-ed and a myriad of other evils in public schools. In Pennsylvania, they are paying property taxes on church parsonages. Many churches across the land are paying

property taxes on what they are not using for regular worship services voluntarily as if the state needs more to squander and waste on all kinds of wicked schemes. Caesar has been a wastrel and now wants Almighty God to bail him out. The worst of all taxes are so-called payroll and Social Security (FICA) taxes on "employees." This was the reason the government gave for confiscating 6 million dollars worth of property from the Indianapolis Baptist Temple. In the first place, those who minister in the Lord's vineyard are not hirelings, nor neither do they receive wages by the IRS definition. These servants of God are the under shepherds of the Lord who minister to the sheep of His pasture and receive love gifts from God's people. Our Lord settled this matter with these words, John 10:12-13, "But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth because he is an hireling, and careth not for his sheep."

Reasons against churches paying taxes are both theological and constitutional. The basic issue is the Lordship of Jesus Christ over His own blood bought body. It is a first commandment issue. God said, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." To understand the origins of the conflict over taxation, it is important to recognize the roots of the problem in pagan faith and practice. In paganism, the state saw itself as the sovereign or all-powerful lord over all things. As the sovereign, its life and power constituted an umbrella under which all things, including religion and education, existed. To have a "legitimate" function, all things had to be licensed, controlled and taxed by the state. Consequently, the state was seen as that power in whom and under whom all peoples and institutions had their life and being. The function of religion under that umbrella was to assist by providing social cement in much the same way as the present state approved religion is functioning in the U.S. today.

Rome persecuted the early church,

not because of religious hostility, but because, among other things, the church refused to recognize the ultimate authority of the state over it. Rome regarded this as a political offense. The early church refused to pay taxes to Rome or any other power, or allow any licensure, regulation or control. See Acts 17: 7.

When Peter said those powerful words as recorded in Acts 4:12, "Neither is their salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved," he was proclaiming a challenge to government authority which had overstepped the limits of legitimate authority. He heralded forth the Lordship of Christ in a society, which claimed Caesar as Lord. This was the problem that Paul and Silas ran into at Philippi. The authorities caught them and brought them to the magistrates and said at Acts 16:20-21, "...These men...do exceedingly trouble our city, And teach customs, which were not lawful for people to receive, neither to observe, being Romans." It was blasphemy to recognize any authority to be supreme except the authority of Caesar.

Another illustration of taxation of the church being a matter of Lordship is the fact that in every state there are vast areas of untaxed lands. In at least one western state, as much as ninety percent of its land area is untaxed. No taxes are paid on state owned land because the state claims sovereignty - the state in this instance is lord. Sovereignty is the prerogative of the state, and hence the taxing, governing, and law making power. Now, the state is making the same claim on properties held by churches as pastors in California discovered a few years ago.

In 1984, the U.S. staked out a claim on the church treasuries in America when they passed the FICA tax and churches collection and payment law. Beginning January 1, 1984, churches were required to pay the Social Security half of the "employees" wages and collect the other half from the workers. Attorney John W. Baker said IRS enforcement options in cases of noncompliance could include seizure of bank as-

sets and property and the beginning of criminal proceedings against the "person or persons who made the determination not to pay taxes." This obviously opened the door for the IRS to audit church records. The churches, we are told are rich, and the pastors are rolling in money and these rich churches need to pay their fair share. But we have a problem - the church treasury is not ours to give. The tithe is the Lord's.

In answer to a tricky question posed to Him, Christ asked a question: Luke 20:24, "Show me a penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said Caesar's." Christ then said: verse 25, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's and unto God the things which be God's." The Lord Jesus was simply saying what belongs to Caesar give it to Caesar, but what belongs to God give it to Him. What imprint is on the Lord's church? A state church has Caesar's imprint through becoming a legal entity. But the N.T. church has the Lord's imprint on it.

John Marshal, a former Supreme Court Justice stated the case well when he said: "The power to tax is the power to destroy." Taxable organizations are answerable to the government, open to inspection and dictates of government. The same unscriptural relationship is established when churches pay taxes to the government and is also established when the government subsidizes the church through tax-exemption. The material assets of a church are a sacred stewardship held in trust for Jesus Christ, the Head of the church.

In the eighties the Indiana State Tax Commission changed its exemption forms to say in the first paragraph, "To be tax-exempt is a privilege that may be waived." And the church seeking tax-exemption must supply a whole litany of things that intrude into the very bowels of the church.

The Chief Priests in Israel said, "We have no king but Caesar." This was an acquiescence of tremendous magnitude to the prevalent doctrine of the preeminence of Caesar. These were men, whofrom childhood, had been taught to

repeat the song almost endlessly, Psalm 47:1, "God is the King of all the earth." They had bowed to the golden image of state worship, denying the absolute supremacy of the King of glory in heaven when they said, "WE HAVE NO KING BUT CAESAR." They also sealed their eternal doom.

Should churches pay withholding and FICA taxes and file tax-exempt forms to be relieved of other taxes such as property, corporate and sales tax? Our bold answer is yes for those "churches" that have gotten in bed with beast government for benefits and privileges through operating as tax-exempt public charities, but for New Testament churches which are non-taxable by Divine right and protected by the federal and state constitutions, never. If the price for this biblical position is to have our lands confiscated and our preachers thrown into prison, so be it..."WE OUGHT TO OBEY GOD RATHER THAN MEN!" (Acts 5:29)

For information on how to organize an unregistered New Testament church, contact us at 317-783-6753 or by e-mail drgregdixon@hotmail.com <<mailto:drgregdixon@hotmail.com>>. Many churches are repenting of their entanglement with government and are beginning to operate as biblical churches for which we believe our Lord rejoices.

NO ROOM Cont'd from pg. 3

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4. ANOTHER SOLDIER'S COMING HOME 4:06
5. I WILL STAND WITH YOU 4:21
6. THE WORD IS MERCY 5:32
7. SWEET HOUR OF PRAYER 3:34
8. I WILL GLORY IN THE CROSS 2:44
9. HE WAS THERE ALL THE TIME 3:40
10. HOW BEAUTIFUL 4:41

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