

“Election Musings”¹

Every Presidential election year the campaign intrigue, excitement, twists and turns, and disappointment can become intoxicating whether “our guy” is the front runner or not. This last year has seen the rise and fall of Giuliani, Clinton, Romney, Huckabee, and the rise – fall – and rise again of McCain. If anything’s certain, it’s the uncertainty of where we’ll end up in November. For those of you not excited about a Clinton-McCain or an Obama-McCain campaign circus, I’d like to offer some sobering thoughts and suggestions.

First. This side of heaven we’ll never get what we want, but we’ll probably get what we (as a nation) deserve. This sounds harsh, but it’s not surprising the current presumptive candidate list doesn’t include any true conservative. With our nation continuing to lurch left, and the implosion of the Republican Party when it walked away from its core principles and conservative (Biblically aligned) base, any position of prominence for conservatives may be years away. Even if McCain picks a conservative for his running mate and wins in November, the real power (and weaknesses) will rest with the President.

Second. Campaign enthusiasm and voter turn-out is the most crucial element of any election. It doesn’t forebode well for the Republican “cause” that the most energetic core (social, fiscal and defense conservatives) have concerns about McCain because of many questionable decisions he’s made – not the least of which was the Immigration Reform Act fiasco. Without enthusiasm for a candidate, people are only motivated to vote against the other side – in this case a morally bankrupt Democratic Party that ideologically follows a relativist god of their own making, and not the sovereign, just, loving God of the Bible we cherish. With the choice of voting against instead of for something, many hold their money instead of investing in political campaigns. More significantly, they won’t walk precincts; encourage others to vote; hand out literature; or talk to neighbors and friends about “our guy”. This makes McCain’s election prospects questionable at best and an embarrassment at worst. The truly tragic impact will be on the next generation of leaders, the down-ticket State and local elections that will suffer for want of voters. This death-spiral could spell the demise of the Republican Party and any hope of a prominent conservative groundswell into the foreseeable future.

Third. Now for the gut check - although McCain may not be as conservative as he would like us to believe, he’s by far superior to either Clinton or Obama. Isn’t half a cookie better than no cookie at all? I believe we have a duty to weigh in on who should rule over us? No matter how vile or acceptable candidates may be, we need to diligently prevent the greater evil from occurring, even if we have to support someone that falls short of what we want. I appreciate and respect those whose conscience may prevent them from voting given these choices. But for me personally, I’m obligated to help ensure a more distasteful outcome doesn’t happen and to elect down-ticket candidates I support. Whatever you decide to do, remember we have more in common through Christ than we’ll ever have in politics. Also, whether you vote or not (and I encourage you to vote) the Lord is the One that ultimately raises up leaders to fulfill His purposes (Prov 21:1).

Finally, I believe the moral issues in this country are more foundational than our defense or economy. Without morality, what is our military power protecting? Without a strong moral base, why would we expect an almighty God to continue to protect us or continue to grant us prosperity (Matt 6:33)? Many use national defense as the litmus test of a Presidential candidate, as if military strength secures all our blessings and freedoms. I think the opposite is true – a strong defense may have delayed the certain national consequences that come from unbridled sexual immorality, same-sex perversion, the destruction of life through abortion, and the unrelenting attacks on anything Christian. To some extent, Christian influence has been marginalized by our own unilateral surrender, but it has also been dampened by Supreme Court decisions that have promoted a whole host of vile practices. Gratefully, McCain is a defense conservative, but my vote is more concerned about future Supreme Court appointments. It’s sobering to consider a President Clinton or Obama nomination to the Supreme Court. The prospects would be significantly better with a President McCain. To me, these decisions, hand-in-hand with aggressive Christian involvement at all levels of community and government will serve our nation better than just relying on greater military strength or economic prosperity. If the foundation is right, the rest will naturally follow. Debase the moral fabric of our nation, and what purpose is served to maintain its defense and economy?

We’re in the middle of a great struggle for the soul of our nation. Our message is right (Col 2:8), and the consequences of devaluing life and morality are well documented (Rom 1:18-19). Our active involvement is still critical independent of the election (Matt 5:13-16; 28:18-20). May our enthusiasm, therefore, be centered in what God can do through us, and through an imperfect President, as we work together to stop the emergence of greater evil.

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