

A Historic Election

By Steve Strang



Congratulations to Barack Obama on his historic election as the first African-American president of the United States. I had the privilege of meeting him last June. He is a very likable person who seems reasonable. Let's pray that he governs from the center and not from the far left.

I supported Sen. John McCain mainly because of his stands on the pro-life issue and the issue of traditional marriage. To me these issues are more important than economic concerns, immigration problems, environmental policy and so on. I believe reasonable people can disagree on those subjects, but there are a few fundamental issues that we as believers must have strong convictions about.

Otherwise, however, I was a reluctant supporter of McCain. I didn't understand the purpose of many of his policies or why he seemed so distant from conservative Christians. It wasn't until he named Sarah Palin as his running mate that his candidacy excited conservative Christians like me.

The Bible tells us to pray for those in authority. We have an opportunity now to live out our faith by praying for our new president. Pray that he will have a change of heart on many of the foundational issues. My colleague Lee Grady sent out an article today titled "10 Ways to Pray for Barack Obama," which you can read by [clicking here](#).

We have seen some former presidents change while they were in office, rise to the occasion and become great leaders. We have also survived liberal and mediocre presidents who didn't, such as advancing conservative values Lyndon Johnson and Jimmy Carter.

And we have seen in the last year that having a self-professed

“evangelical Christian” in the White House may have helped a little, but it did not do a lot to change the moral character of our country. In fact, though I personally admire President Bush and thank God for his strong leadership on the war against terror, I, like many Americans, have been disappointed in him in many ways. Undoubtedly his unpopularity contributed to McCain's defeat.

This year, with everything that's happening politically, it would have been difficult, if not impossible, for any Republican to beat almost any Democrat. I have no doubt that Hillary Clinton would have won over Mitt Romney—or Mike Huckabee, whom I supported. People in America obviously want a change. The scary thing for those of us who believe the Bible and want conservative values is that the change may move the country too far to the left politically and morally.

Thankfully the marriage amendments that were on the ballots in Arizona, Florida and California all passed. Here in Florida a proposed amendment to the state constitution must receive 60 percent of the vote to pass—which is the highest percentage requirement in the nation. These amendments were clearly based on a moral issue—the definition of marriage as the union of a man and a woman—and we can thank God our prayers were answered. I think the fact that all three amendments passed shows that voters just want a change in the White House rather than that our country as a whole is shifting toward the left.

To continue reading the Strang Report, [click here](#).

African-Americans can be proud of this historic moment. As I have written before, I think it's time for an African-American to be in the White House. I have worked hard for racial reconciliation throughout my entire adult life, and I will continue to do so.

I regret that in the heat of the political battle some who read my Strang Report felt I was insensitive to the feelings

of African-Americans. I regret using the unfortunate term "so-called Christians" when speaking of those who disagree with me. I apologize to anyone I offended.

At the very longest, Obama will be president for only eight years. At the end of his term or terms in office, those of us who believe in Christ will still be brothers and sisters in Christ regardless of who is leading our country and what policies are in place.

I hope this election is a wake-up call for the body of Christ. Though "conservative Christians" did play a part in the political process, often those who get involved are people who are simply conservative politically—not necessarily born again. In fact, many of the activists are so strident in their views that they do not help the cause of Christ.

We really need to see people changing in this country on a personal level. You and I may not influence the halls of Congress, but we do influence people in our families, our workplaces and our churches.

I'm concerned about some of the prophecies that came out during this election. Earlier this year several "well-known" prophets were predicting that Rudy Giuliani would be president. More recently several were predicting, although quietly, that McCain would win against all odds, as Harry Truman did in 1948. I received an e-mail a few hours after the election from one who had issued such a prophecy, apologizing for the error and saying he is going to take a time of reflection to pray about what God is saying.

I recognize that all prophets "see through a glass darkly," and it's human nature to project upon the Almighty the things we want. Maybe it's also human nature to have "wishful thinking." But when we confuse it with hearing from the Lord, it's not good.

I have been amazed at the number of responses I've received to

the Strang Report, especially to some of the things I have “cut and pasted” from other sources. This morning I received quite a few e-mails that I thought would interest you. One is “Understanding the Psychology of Post-Election Distress Syndrome” by Dwight Bain, a nationally certified counselor whom I have known for several years. You can read his article below.

My friend Mat Staver, who was very active in helping to get the marriage amendment passed in Florida, issued a press release sharing his values on rebuilding the base and advancing conservative values. [Click here](#) to read his comments. He believes the passage of all three marriage amendments shows that conservative values still matter.

James Pinkerton, whom I enjoy watching on Fox News, wrote a short but insightful analysis of why McCain lost, which seemed to ring true as I read it. [Click here](#) to read the analysis.

Finally, former Gov. Mike Huckabee of Arkansas, whom I supported strongly during the primaries, sent out an e-mail titled “We Will Be Back In Strength.” [Click here](#) to read his comments, which include the following: “Politics is not an event but a process. Sometimes we lose the events, but it never gives the right to stop being faithful to our principles that enlisted us in the process. We shall live to fight another day.”

As always, we welcome your comments on the blog. Please forward this to your family and friends, and ask them to sign up for the Strang Report.

Understanding the Psychology of Post-Election Distress Syndrome

By Dwight Bain, Nationally Certified Counselor

A major election leads to major change—psychologically, that is. No matter who wins an election, the unexpected emotional let down or explosive reaction after the ballots are counted can be overwhelming to many, especially the aged or over-involved who can be set up for crushing amounts of what I call . or Post-Election Distress Syndrome.

This election has likely been the most stressful of any during our lifetime because of numbing news fatigue and continual media over-exposure, yet the real problems are yet to come. Personal anxiety, professional panic and poorly thought out decisions are on the horizon regardless of your political persuasion.

Why such a gloomy projection?

It's based on how this election process has been so overwhelming much of the time with months of negative news, never ending data to process and confusing choices to make on complex issues while partisan experts are shouting every half-hour on news/talk stations that we are all doomed if their candidate doesn't win. Not to mention the huge challenge on who is trust-worthy, since you often don't know who will say something inappropriate on YouTube and crash their credibility, leaving you feeling very alone to make some major decisions without leaders who lacked the strength of character to stand on their convictions instead of popular opinion polls.

Mountain top experiences guarantee the next step is always the valley

Think of a major campaign like climbing a major mountain range. You prepare for years and climb for months to finally reach the top. Once there the view is great. You take some pictures, but you can't stay on a mountain top, so no matter which way you head, it's down in any direction. After the mountain top comes the valley, which is a normal part of life.

The danger is that for many people the downward slide is so unexpected. Most actual mountain climbing accidents happen on the way down, and I project that there will be millions of people who are unprepared for the emotional upheaval they are about to experience after the election is over.

Everyone will feel some degree of emotional let down once the issues have been decided and the acceptance speeches are given. That's normal, however for some the removal of posters, signs, balloons and banners will lead to a free fall of depressing emotions. If someone has been a 'news junkie' the last few months it will be especially stressful. Those feelings of distress will come out in one of two ways.

Two possible reactions to post-election distress

1) Anger –

Which can lead to violence and impulsive decisions. People who feel violated by the election process will often turn to dumping volcanic levels of anger at someone or something to find relief for the pressure inside. This can lead to devastating decisions, impulsive rage or using the wrong words in front of the wrong people and losing credibility or worse a job. This can happen in men or women, young or old, but is most commonly seen in more extroverted personalities and it tends to blow up and blow out fast.

2) Apathy –

This is a more dangerous reaction, since it can lead from distress to the early stages of depression. Stuffing emotions inside is like burying them alive and they just keep building up, yet instead of blowing up and out, they blow in. This leads a person to feel emotionally numb, and often can cause an individual to commit a series of very quiet, yet very harmful self-destructive acts. Eating for comfort, drinking to numb the pain, hooking up with the wrong partner to try and forget about the election or just refusing to answer the phone, closing the mini-blinds and checking out on life like a

hermit hiding in a dark cave.

The best choice after an election is completed is **Acceptance**. It's over and now it's time to move on with whatever leaders and issues the majority of voters selected. You can't change the outcome of an election, but you can freak yourself out with fears about the future apocalypse predicted by many. Don't do that! Life will go on, and your world will continue. God is bigger than any politician and isn't in a panic, so trust in heaven's agenda and not that of Washington and you'll immediately find a deeper level of peace.

What happens in your house is way more important than what happens in the White House since you can't control what political leaders do, but you can control you. Let this journey off of the political 'mountain' be one of a growing sense of perspective as you remember that after the valley there will be another mountain to climb. There will be another day to vote on national issues and when the dust settles your life will usually be about as good as you choose to make it. This approach takes the power to control your mood away from the politicians or the media, so you can build a better life without losing sleep or energy from the dangers of post-election distress syndrome.

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