

How Holy Spirit Used My Friend to Impact George H.W. Bush

Americans are still mourning the recent death of former President George H.W. Bush. Many prominent political and religious leaders have shared their thoughts and feelings about him. But last week, I had the privilege to talk about the 41st president with one of my old friends, Doug Wead, who worked closely with Bush Sr. in the White House. He shared with me not only how God used him as Bush Sr.'s special assistant but also about the bias he faced as a Christian in the political arena.

Back when Bush Sr. was vice president to Ronald Reagan, he discovered Doug was a born-again Christian and asked for help to build a relationship with the evangelical community. In a way, Doug tutored Bush Sr. in all the major branches on Christianity in the country as well as a long list of prominent faith leaders.

"He was a patrician, a New England Episcopalian," Doug says of Bush Sr. "He couldn't afford to let people know that he didn't know anything about one of the greatest religious revivals of our generation."

Doug wrote thousands of pages of memorandum on evangelical thought and biblical truth, and Bush Sr. wrote back little notes of gratitude. By God's grace, Doug saw that Bush Sr. was using Doug's ideas and letting them affect his speeches and decisions. Doug later found out that Bush Sr. was vetting the memos with his son, George W. Bush, who was also a born-again believer. Without realizing it, Doug was sending spiritual memos to two future presidents.

When Bush Sr. was elected president, Doug suddenly became an

insider. Bush Sr. hired Doug as his special assistant for two years. He handled the president's relationships with religious groups, law-enforcement groups, police unions, veterans organizations, conservative groups and more. He was in charge of making sure Bush Sr. stayed connected with the Christian population and their interests.

In fact, as I mentioned in one of my Strang Reports last week, Doug is the reason I met Bush Sr. He also invited me several times to the White House to interact with the president. But I've known Doug since 1968, when I met him through Joyce Strader, whom I consider my spiritual mother, and her husband, Karl, who was my pastor at the time. When I met Doug, he was an up-and-coming evangelist, wrote books about Catholic charismatics and published a magazine called *Restoration*. He was considered a big deal in our circle and perhaps even a bit controversial.

Doug grew up in the Assemblies of God, but his success in politics is a feat few Pentecostals have achieved. He says the Holy Spirit drew him into politics to be a light in a dark arena, but it wasn't always easy. He remembers one time when he was writing a book about presidents. He was about to write something spiritual about one of them but felt a check in his spirit.

"I felt the Holy Spirit saying to me, 'Look, I've got plenty of people who can write this book for Thomas Nelson,'" Doug says. "'I want you to write this book for Simon & Schuster and keep your foot in the door. I'll tell you when to speak up, but until that time comes, keep your mouth shut.'"

And that's exactly what Doug did. He soon found out just how much bias Christians encountered in politics and corporate America. He says Christians would be astounded if they knew just how calculated and terrible that bias is.

"Jesus predicted it," Doug says. "He said, 'They'll hate you

because you're Mine.'"

For instance, Doug remembers the bias against Jim Watt, a born-again Christian who served as secretary of interior during Ronald Reagan's presidency. When the White House was considering Watt as secretary of interior, they brought him into a Senate hearing. Doug says they asked questions like "If you're a born-again Christian, how can you be secretary of interior? If you believe Jesus is coming again, why would you want to maintain the parks? Why would you care about the environment?"

Doug later encountered this same bias in the White House during Bush Sr.'s presidency. At one point, Doug predicted that a religious figure would rise up to run for president and would garner the born-again vote. The other advisers thought Doug was crazy, so they quickly showed that memo to the president to make fun of it. But not too long after that, Pat Robertson ran for president, proving Doug's prediction correct.

It's encouraging to hear how God is using His people to impact politics for His glory. Thankfully, Doug isn't the only one the Lord is using. There are many other men and women of God serving in politics who are striving to turn this nation around. And with Donald Trump in office, I believe God is doing exactly that. In my new book, *Trump Aftershock*, I talk in depth about the many ways God is using Trump to fulfill His purposes for America. You can buy a copy of the book and download a free chapter at .

Listen to my podcast below to hear Doug speak more about the things God led him to do while in the White House and throughout the rest of his interesting career. And be sure to read tomorrow's newsletter, where I will share more of Doug's personal thoughts about Bush Sr. and his faith.