

Youssef: Every Issue is a Moral Issue

✖ CNN's Jack Cafferty has advice for the GOP: Park your morality at the door.

On June 14, Cafferty expressed surprise that, in the previous night's presidential debate, "social issues—like abortion, gay marriage, 'don't ask, don't tell'—still manage to work their way into the conversation. And that may prove to be a problem for Republicans. ... These are not the issues that middle America is worried about. They would like to be able to find a job."

I submit that these so-called "social issues" mean more to "middle America" than Cafferty realizes. We call them "moral issues." To us, abortion is the slaughter of innocent human life, on a moral level with genocide or the slave trade.

What Cafferty doesn't understand is that every issue is a moral issue. The current bad economy didn't just *happen*. It was the direct result of immoral choices made by our leaders.

The national debt, national security, taxation, the welfare state, border security—there's not a single issue that doesn't have a moral component. The government has a moral obligation to live within its

means, to protect its citizens, to encourage industriousness and discourage indolence, and to secure our borders against terrorists and drug cartels.

When voters consider a candidate for public office, they should not just ask, "Can this person manage the economy?" They need to know, "Does this person have the values and character to hold public office?"

A candidate who doesn't value innocent life shouldn't be president. In 2002, Barack Obama voted to oppose the Induced Birth Infant Liability Act, outlawing infanticide of babies who survive late-term abortions. Obama didn't merely vote in favor of abortion, but in favor of killing babies outside the womb. A man whose moral compass is this defective cannot make moral decisions.

He promised an end to earmarks, a secure border, no lobbyists in his administration, no recess appointments, airing the healthcare debate on C-SPAN, elimination of failed programs—and he didn't keep even one of those promises. Candidate Obama opposed "same-sex marriage," but as president he nullified the Defense of Marriage Act. A record of broken promises does not equal moral leadership.

Cafferty says that middle America doesn't care about "same-sex marriage." But polls show Americans overwhelmingly oppose it—not because they hate or feel morally superior to homosexual people. They

simply

want to preserve God's plan for marriage. Marriage should remain what it has been throughout recorded history—a covenantal union between a man and a woman. Here are three reasons why Americans object to redefining marriage:

1. The best environment for children is a traditional family—one mom, one dad. Children from stable two-parent homes are significantly less prone to depression, addiction and suicide than children from non-traditional families. A moral society should encourage the family structure that best nurtures children.

2. Marriage ideally brings together two people—one male, one female—who complement each other. Mothers are generally protective and nurturing while fathers tend to challenge children to confront risks and embrace opportunities. Children need both influences. Two “mothers” can't teach boys to become men; two “fathers” can't teach girls to become women.

3. Children need to feel connected to their biological origins whenever possible. Yale psychiatrist Kyle Pruett found that children “hunger for an abiding paternal presence.” They struggle with questions about their biological origins and identity.

As a Christian pastor, I have nothing but compassion for homosexual

people. I understand that it hurts to know that society doesn't accept your relationship as "normal" and "natural." But you can't force society to accept your way of life through court rulings.

The 2012 election is not just about jobs. It's about the moral choices America must make. If we hold our elected leaders to a high moral standard, there will be prosperity and plenty of jobs to go around. Leaders with a strong moral compass for the sanctity of life and the sanctity of marriage will generally make sound moral decisions on every other issue affecting our lives.

In October 1789, John Adams, America's first vice president, gave a speech to the Massachusetts militia. "Our Constitution," he said, "was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other." I pray that these wise words would become a motto for our nation—but I fear that they may become our epitaph.

Dr. Michael Youssef's expertise on the Islamic culture and the Middle East in today's post-modern world is actively sought by hundreds of thousands of followers around the globe. With a Ph.D. from Emory University in social anthropology, his Egyptian heritage gives him particular insight into the cultural and religious entanglements of international affairs. ? It is estimated that over 10 million viewers/listeners around the world are tuned in every week through an international Christian media ministry founded by Youssef, . It broadcasts via radio and television to over 200 countries

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