

A Call to Christian Leaders to Speak Up to Our New President

Next Tuesday, January 20, America will inaugurate Barack Obama, the first African-American president. That will be a historic day—one I'll be glad I lived long enough to witness. But many who believe in biblical values are concerned that an Obama presidency will turn the nation sharply left. Some of my conservative Christian friends are so depressed over the prospect of the next four years they refuse to watch the news because it only makes them upset.

I supported John McCain, mainly because of his stand on abortion. His personal life has been a mess, and he was less willing to talk about the role of faith in his life than was Obama. However, McCain took a pro-life position, and Obama was for abortion rights.

When I met Obama at a meeting last June, I asked him about abortion. You can read my Strang Reports of that meeting at [. He said he wanted to cut down on the need for abortion. He was very convincing—and his commitment to do that made it easier for conservative black Christians to back him.](#)

Interestingly, in California, Florida and Arizona, constitutional amendments to uphold traditional marriage passed with the help of black and Hispanic citizens who also voted for Obama. The passing of these amendments shows me that the nation has not suddenly taken a turn toward the left. Remember, Obama won by only seven percentage points. People were tired of President Bush and the war, and Obama promised change.

I hope the change is not as radical as some fear. Though Obama made conciliatory remarks to the Christian leaders at the June

meeting, he has said that in the first 100 days of his administration he'll pass the Freedom of Choice Act, which would overturn all anti-abortion laws at both the state and the national levels. Myles Munroe, a well-known black leader and friend, responded to my post-election analysis in a way that eloquently explains how conservative black leaders feel about Obama's election:

"I am not in agreement with Barack Obama's policy position regarding abortion, homosexuality and same-sex relations, and no Bible-believing kingdom citizen could agree with these positions. However, as regarding his election as the first black president of the USA, this cannot and must not be minimized as to the importance and value it is to the tremendous historical, racial and cultural impact worldwide. Anyone who has been affected by oppression in the past 200 years could appreciate the importance of this event.

"The celebration of this accomplishment does not mean the acceptance of Mr. Obama's social policies but rather what he represents as a symbol of the restoration and recovery of human dignity from the long march of oppression and the curse of slavery.

"The Lord used Joseph to influence the pagan king, Pharaoh of Egypt ... [and] Daniel to influence the pagan King Nebuchadnezzar [of] Babylon. ... God used these men of God to influence those nations after the king was in power" (emphasis added).

This is a time for godly leaders who have Obama's ear to speak up, as Joseph and Daniel did. Many of them are Charisma readers, and most are personal friends of mine. So I call on them to stand for morality in government, the rights of the unborn, and traditional values relating to marriage and sexual morality.

Probably the evangelical who has the most potential influence

is the Rev. Kirbyjon Caldwell, pastor of Windsor Village United Methodist Church in Houston. But Bishop T.D. Jakes attended the meeting with Obama in June and later wrote an open letter of congratulations to him on his candidacy.

Other leaders who could gain access, such as Charles E. Blake, presiding bishop of the Church of God in Christ, Bishop Kenneth Ulmer of Faithful Central Bible Church in Los Angeles, and the Rev. Floyd Flake, former congressman and current pastor of the Greater Allen AME Cathedral in Brooklyn, New York, may be able to speak prophetically to Obama in a way the traditional conservative leaders who spoke to Ronald Reagan or Bush couldn't.

It's as Munroe wrote me: "I believe the Lord has the power to change the heart of Barack Obama, and we should not doubt the power of the Holy Spirit to change a heart. Let us pray for those in authority as we are admonished in Romans 13. This is our duty now."

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As usual, your comments are welcome.