

After Election, Church Has Work To Do

When the votes were counted and it was clear Barack Obama had been re-elected, I felt a profound sense of sadness. That's because from my worldview as a charismatic Christian, Obama's policies represent everything wrong with America.

He claims to be a Christian and he seems to be a fine family man. The one time I met him he seemed thoroughly likable. But Obama favors policies such as same-sex marriage and abortion on-demand. In addition, his policies seem to be eroding religious liberties at every turn.

He has been a weak leader by almost every measure—his taxing policies hurt an already weak economy; he promised many things he didn't come close to delivering; and, from what I can tell, he not only botched protecting our consulate in Benghazi, Libya on Sept. 11, but then lied about the fact the attack was by a mob angered by an anti-Islamic video rather than by terrorists.

But, the American people have spoken, and it probably says more about where America is than about Obama.

I remember when Bill Clinton was elected in 1992. There was almost a depression over the body of Christ. But by comparison, Bill Clinton now seems rather middle-of-the-road. I wonder if, in a few years, we'll think Obama isn't as bad as whoever will have risen to power. With the way things are going, that could happen.

Closer to home, my friend Scott Plakon was defeated in the race for State House of Representatives District 30 in central Florida in what may have been the most expensive legislative race in Florida history. As we reported last week, the left targeted Scott as an "extremist." The reason: He's a

principled conservative.

Scott's been effective in supporting the life of the unborn, opposing the expansion of gambling and other issues important to Christians. He never had a hint of scandal. He is likeable and he worked hard as a legislator and as a campaigner.

Yet "the other side" was energized to put in a very liberal opponent who favors abortion for any reason, same sex-marriage, and everything the liberal teachers union wanted. Scott's crime, apparently, is that he wants teacher pay to be tied to merit and he stood up to the union.

So while the teachers' union and liberals were energized beyond anything I've witnessed recently, I saw firsthand how reluctant committed Christians were to support one of their own. Even though Scott is a tithe-paying charismatic, the pastors I talked to about supporting him said they'd vote for him, but there was no sense that they were rallying to support one of our own who has proven to be an effective leader. It seemed everything else was more important than supporting Scott's bid for re-election.

Last Sunday, I was a surrogate for Scott in two services at one of the largest charismatic churches in our area. The pastor, a good friend, invited me to say a few words since Scott could not be there. I talked about how important this election is and what a clear choice we have in many elections such as Scott's.

I never mentioned parties or names. I just mentioned that those who don't share our values had targeted Scott and that we were trying to get out the word that this was an important race in a newly formed district and we needed to support a fellow Christian who supported our values.

The people listened politely as if I had been talking about the importance of picking up litter from the historic St. John's River nearby. Maybe it was my lack of persuasiveness,

but no one seemed energized even to find out more about whether they lived in that district or could help out in some way.

In a way, it's what I experienced a few years ago when Keith Butler, who pastors the largest charismatic church in Michigan, ran for U.S. Senate. Most of those I talked to about supporting him felt no connection even though I usually knew that theologically and politically they agreed with Butler. He lost that race to one of the most liberal senators, who ultimately was re-elected and cast the deciding vote for Obamacare a few years later.

There is so much more that needs to be said about this election. Where is God in all this? Did God not hear our prayers or realize that tens of thousands fasted and prayed over the last 40 days? Or is this somehow God's judgment against America?

As Christians we have our work cut out for us. The demographics are shifting. Those who believe biblical principles are becoming the minority. We are in a democracy where the majority rules. Those who favor gambling, abortion, any sort of sexual practice, debauchery of every type actually see us as extremists to be feared are gaining every day.

Meanwhile, there is a remnant in America who love Jesus. But they seem more interested in jumping and shouting and "having church" than being salt and light.

But it isn't just the charismatics who are complacent. I attended a "God and country" rally last Sunday at a large Baptist church. A lot of money was spent to put on the rally and others like it around Florida. It was supposedly an area-wide rally, but there were just a couple of hundred people.

That Baptist church could have filled the building just with its own congregation. And it was just preaching to those already committed to the conservative cause. I doubt any votes

were changed by the rally. Not many in Orlando even knew the rally happened.

Maybe things will get so bad in America that the body of Christ will finally wake up. But will it be too late by then? Is it too late now? I feel as if we're at a point it will take a miracle of God to turn things around.

Meanwhile, we must still be salt and light. God's Word is still true no matter who is in the White House or who has control of Congress. People still need the Savior. We need a radical revival in this nation.

And it's not just so one political party can be in power. It is so hearts will be changed; lives changed and a majority of our fellow countrymen are energized to get this country back on the right track.

What do you think? Please leave us your comments.