

We Don't Need Politics As Usual, But Social Transformation

It's the political season in what many are saying is the  most important presidential election of our lifetime, so I turned to my good friend, Bishop Harry R. Jackson Jr., to be the guest editor for the January/February issue of *Ministry Today*. You can read the digital issues of the magazine by clicking on the cover images below.

Bishop Jackson has appeared on the *CBS Evening News*, Fox News' *Special Report*, *The O'Reilly Factor* and *The Tavis Smiley Show*. Bishop Jackson's articles have been featured in *The Wall Street Journal*, the *New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and the *Los Angeles Times*.

And why not? He's Harvard educated and very articulate—something the mainstream media respects. But at the same time Bishop Jackson is a great spokesman from a Christian perspective—he understands the believer's mandate to bring God's kingdom to earth. Bishop Jackson has a successful track record of growing churches and discipling believers. He hasn't strayed into liberal theology, and his integrity is above reproach.

Bishop Jackson also defies stereotypes. An African-American "bishop," he embodies the best—not the worst—of what that usually implies. He has solid conservative values when many African-American preachers just flow with liberal Democrats. But while conservative Republicans trust him and work closely with him, he doesn't join their ranks. He's a conservative Democrat who speaks boldly in the corridors of power about right and wrong, good and evil, and trust and betrayal.

On a personal basis, I have gotten to know and trust him over

the years—first at networking meetings of leaders where I became impressed with his verbal contributions. I noticed that like the old E.F. Hutton commercials, when Bishop Jackson spoke, others listened.

Our friendship was deepened in 2006 when he battled esophageal cancer and later suffered a stroke. It looked as if the enemy was trying to take out one of the most articulate leaders in the battle for the soul of America. My friends, Kim and Ardell Daniels, saw it as a spiritual battle. When I found out that Ardell was flying to Baltimore to pray for Bishop Jackson who had been in Johns Hopkins University receiving treatment for about 10 weeks, I wanted to go along. For about four-five hours, we bombarded heaven on Bishop Jackson's behalf.

I know it wasn't just our prayers; many were praying for him. But the fact is that God answered prayers. Today, he is cancer free and in perfect health. Traveling to pray for him, experiencing that time of intense spiritual warfare and visiting him a second time at Johns Hopkins, bonded our friendship in a deep way.

In today's media environment, white conservative preachers are marginalized or ridiculed. Many black preachers go along with the liberal agenda even if they aren't comfortable with it. But they are timid to confront it. Thank God there are godly black leaders like Bishop Jackson who will stand up and speak up for what's right. It's important for pastors to be involved and encourage their followers to be involved in the political process. Too many are intimidated.

Because the primary season leading up to the presidential election is upon us, I wanted an issue on political activism. But Bishop Jackson exceeded expectations. He invited other outstanding authors to write and the end result is something much more powerful—an issue on social transformation, which involves being involved politically. Read it and be transformed, so you can in turn transform society.

Steve Strang published Bishop Harry R. Jackson Jr. and Tony Perkins' book *Personal Faith, Public Policy*. You can follow Steve on Facebook or Twitter @ministry21.