

It will also require that we focus on honest solutions rather than attacks. The Bible has no record of attack ads being coordinated by Joseph, Esther, and Daniel, though they were in fact the targets of vicious attacks.

We don't know whether these leaders would be Republicans or Democrats today. But we do know that they would strive to raise the level of public policy

discussion and that they would conduct themselves in a manner testifying that politics is and ought to be a vocation—a holy calling.

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Why I Shall Vote for George W. Bush

by Donald R. McAdams

I shall vote this November 7 for George W. Bush to be president of the United States. Does this have anything to do with the fact that I was raised an Adventist? I think not, but perhaps it does.

My father was a Democrat. My mother was a Republican. I was a Democrat from a young age. During my college years my hero was Hubert Humphrey. I voted for LBJ, Hubert Humphrey, George McGovern, and twice for Jimmy Carter. The only reluctant vote was for McGovern. I thought he was too liberal. I just couldn't make myself vote for Nixon.

During Ronald Reagan's first term I became a Republican. I had never voted a straight Democratic ticket before, and I have not voted a straight Republican ticket since. In fact, I have and will again this year hold receptions in my home for Democratic candidates.

But today I am a solid Republican. Why? Primarily because the Democratic Party changed. At least in my view, the Democratic Party turned away from vigorous opposition to Communism. America became as much responsible for the Cold War as the Soviet Union. Whatever went wrong in international affairs, Democrats wanted to blame America. Garbage, I thought. Meanwhile, Reagan set out to win the Cold War and did.

Also, it seemed to me that Democrats were increasingly intent on dividing the country into victims and victimizers. The Democrats of my early years championed the interests of working class Americans. Today's Democrats defend victims: racial victims, gender victims, sexual orientation victims, economic victims, pollution victims, victims of oil companies, pharmaceutical companies, and on and on. In this, the richest, freest, and most nondiscriminatory society since the world began, does victimology and class warfare make sense?

Lastly, today's Democrats seem to believe that Washington has the solution for every problem that faces every community, even every individual. State and local elected officials apparently are not smart enough or compassionate enough to solve local problems. And new entitlements are out there waiting to be discovered so that Washington can provide. What looks like civic compassion to many looks to me like pandering for votes with other people's money.

I know I have painted Democrats with broad strokes and harsh colors. I could do the same for Republicans—too many far right fanatics, too white, too fearful of international organizations, too often tolerant of discrimination, too often lacking in compassion, and much more. Both parties have their extremists. Both parties demagogue. Both parties have their share of rascals and saints.

But on balance, Republicans are more committed to the public policies that I believe are best for America: a foreign policy built around America's strategic interests, a strong national defense, free trade, limited government

with policy made as close as possible to the people, and government policies that focus more on creating opportunity than on providing benefits.

Opportunity is the key word. Freedom is what I value most of all. Real freedom, not freedom *from*, which is another way to say security, but freedom *to*. Civil society must provide both freedom and security, but I think the tilt should be toward freedom.

As I have grown older I have discovered that at heart I am a libertarian. I think I always was. But I am a practical libertarian, so I vote Republican.

Is there a link between my Adventist heritage and my libertarian leanings? Perhaps. I was very interested in religious liberty issues in my teens. If Sunday laws were enacted, could the Mark of the Beast be far behind? Government would lead the persecution in the Last Days. Might it not be smart to be fearful of government even now?

Still, I may be stretching the point. Maybe I was attracted to religious liberty because I was already a libertarian at heart. Maybe I became more Republican as I accumulated wealth (my children's explanation). Maybe, in the end, my mother's influence was stronger than my father's. Who knows?

What I do know is that I am sometimes a reluctant Republican. I am, however, a most enthusiastic supporter of George W. Bush. Maybe this is because I have seen up close how effectively he has brought Democrats and Republicans together to craft compromise legislation in the best interests of all Texans.

Maybe it is because I have seen his leadership for education reform. Maybe it is because I have seen him build bridges to Texans of color. Maybe it is because I know him personally as a man of intelligence, integrity, and vision with extraordinary leadership skills.

But even if I did not have this firsthand knowledge of Bush, I would be attracted by his policy proposals. At the heart of everyone is a belief that individual Americans can be trusted to make decisions for themselves. They can be trusted to keep more of the money they earn and spend it for what they value rather than for what government values. They can be trusted to manage some of their own Social Security investments. They can be trusted to work through faith-based organizations to meet many of the needs of their less fortunate fellow citizens. And if public schools fail to meet the needs of their children, they can be trusted to choose schools that will.

So, I shall vote for George W. Bush on November 7. Perhaps my Adventist heritage has nothing to do with this vote. I am sure my politics owe more to Thomas Jefferson than to Ellen White. Still, I grew up valuing freedom above all else. Whoever taught me this was an Adventist.

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I'm with Teddy Roosevelt and My Grandmother

by Roy Branson

I have spent delightful hours talking about public policy with Don McAdams and David Pendleton. I deeply respect both of them for devoting years of their lives to elected public service. But really, fel-