

The Democratic Campaign's Unheard Religious Undertones

Each of the three presidential candidates has long-standing ties with well-known religious leaders, some of whom serve as spiritual advisors to the candidates. In reviewing who serves as a source of inspiration to the candidates, perhaps one can also finally put to rest the big question as to whether or not Barack Obama is Christian or Muslim, a source of much speculation during his attempt to get to the White House.

Questions About Obama's Religion

Undoubtedly there could be negative fallout if, in fact Obama was Muslim. Given the tense situation in the Middle East and America's unfavorable view of extremists and terrorists, much has been made about Obama's name and inferences regarding his religious preferences. Hillary Clinton even jumped on the bandwagon by releasing photos of Obama in a turban during his visit to Africa.

The fact is, for many years Obama has been a member of the Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago. His former minister, Reverend Jeremiah Wright, has come under heavy fire for making some harsh anti-American comments and disparaging remarks about Bill and Hillary Clinton. Obama has denounced the Reverend for making those remarks and has vehemently stated he does not share those feelings. Meanwhile, Reverend Wright has retired and the church is now under the leadership of a new minister.

Hillary Clinton's Spiritual Advisor

The Clinton family has long been associated with the Reverend Billy Graham, whose counsel has been sought by many presidential administrations. Known for his business empire built around evangelical crusades, Hillary first heard Reverend Graham preach at the Northern California crusade when she attended with her then-boyfriend Bill Clinton in 1971. In the time since, Reverend Graham has served her both as friend and advisor, including helping her through the Monica Lewinsky scandal.

Although the Reverend Graham publicly refers to the Clinton clan as close friends, he says he does not endorse anyone for political office. He made a comment in 2005 stating Bill Clinton would make an excellent evangelist, and that he could leave and let Hillary run the country. Many people took that statement as an endorsement for her presidential campaign – a rumor his son was quick to quell. Franklin Graham explained the comment was meant as a joke and nothing more.

If push comes to shove, though, there are some who could question Hillary Clinton's association with Reverend Graham. Statements were released in 2002 that date back to the Richard Nixon presidency, when Reverend Graham was recorded speaking of the "Jewish domination of the media." The tapes further went on to reveal Reverend Graham's negative views of the Jewish media and its implications for America.

Some speculate that Hillary Clinton has not made much of Reverend Wright's comments about her largely because she does not want to stir up a hornet's nest regarding Reverend Graham and his remarks. Still others believe that in light of Geraldine Ferraro's racist comments that Hillary could be seen as starting a race issue if she pressed the point right now. Either way, neither is likely to come out of such a dispute completely unscathed.

For the most part, the country needs a candidate that will bring our budget back into balance, reduce our rapidly expanding national debt, and provide solid solutions to help families, independent business owners, and self-employed individuals prosper once again. While the religious aspect of the campaigns sheds a different light on the candidates, the bottom line is that we need the most qualified individual in the White House, regardless of who their spiritual advisor may be.

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About the Author

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