

Can the 2008 Election be won by a Slogan?

Contributed by Rev Michael Bresciani
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Can a simple slogan sweep a candidate to victory in a presidential race? The shortest and most honest answer to that is simply; yes! It wouldn't be the first time.

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Campaign slogans are usually coined by the public, a newspaper or a very savvy campaign manager and a few by the candidates themselves. Like the battle cry of generals a slogan can be a rallying point that when repeated enough can stir whole armies to victory.

{bot_wrgoogle}Slogans and campaign spins are as old as this country. Abraham Lincoln's 1860 slogan was "Vote Yourself a Farm." In 1844 Henry Clay's ill fated slogan was "Who is James K. Polk" which was soon answered with "he is the eleventh President of the United States of America." In the Carter campaign of 1976 the slogan that seemed best to fit Jimmy Carter's down home Southerner image was "Not Just Peanuts" Who can forget Herbert Hoover's "A Chicken in Every Pot" in the election of 1928.

Slogans largely fall into two categories. The first is a call to stay on track or return to what has been working. In 1864 Lincoln's bid for the presidency used the slogan "Don't Swap Horses in the Middle of the Stream." Warren Harding used the slogan "Return to Normalcy" in the 1920 race. John Kerry used "Let America be America Again" in 2004 and who will ever forget Ronald Reagan's "Are You Better off Than You Were Four Years Ago" in 1980.

The second kind of slogan most often used in presidential campaigns is a call for change or a whole new start. Barack Obama's "It's Our Time for Change" echoes both the 1976 campaign of Jimmy Carter "A Leader, For a Change" and Walter Mondale's "America Needs a Change" in 1984.

Blasting crowds with simple slogans can stir up the best and the worst in Americans. From about 1850 to 1920 more people were lynched in America than all other countries combined throughout history. No doubt the slogan chanted loudly above the objections of the local sheriff or any other voice of reason was "String Em Up." To the chagrin of both outlaw and innocent that slogan cost the lives of hundreds.

In the minds of some Americans it was a slogan that got O. J Simpson off the hook for a very gruesome murder. The slogan "If the Evidence Doesn't Fit – You Must Acquit" was repeated hundreds of times to jurors who may have struggled with the complexities of DNA evidence but were prone to latch on to the Johnny Cochran's catchy slogan with ease.

I attended two seminaries but graduated from one with the distinction of being one of only three Caucasians' to graduate in its entire history. One of the most memorable times at that school was during the weekly chapel services. Some of the most inspiring sermons I have ever heard were preached to the rhythm of the repeated slogan derived from the main theme of the sermon or a single part of a scripture passage. It was the iambic pentameter of the sermon the pulsing repetition that drove the message into the psyche. I have seen this kind of

preaching countless times in black ministers since then and I know it can be a positive thing; but not always.

I was thrown back to over thirty years in my past when recently Barack Obama was seen addressing over 17,000 people in a speech in the mid-south. He drove home his message with the now often repeated catch phrase of his campaign "Our Time for Change."

I could feel the energy rising as the crowd cheered but the emotional side of me gave way to the more rational and analytical and I wondered what change he was specifically speaking of. Researching his campaign speeches and promises I discovered that he wasn't promising all that much, and certainly nothing new. But even if he meant every one of his promises could he pull it off? Has any politician ever pulled it off?

The big changes he proposes are better schools and education, lower taxes and health care for everyone. Every politician from Washington to George Bush made those promises. Hasn't anyone noticed none of these things has ever materialized?

Schools are breeding grounds for drugs immorality and violence; taxes are higher than at any time in our history and universal health care in America is a lumbering threat to our faltering economy that nothing can resolve. In the sycophantic cheering no one in the crowd noticed anything but their new golden boy of change. I can hear the remarks of the crowd in a year or two; nothing new there either just the old familiar "promises, promises, promises."

It is not what Obama wants to change that worries many Americans It is what he refuses to change that is their greatest concern. His refusal to put an end to over 1,000,000 abortions a year and coddling up to the gay minorities at the expense of traditional families and marriage is what's got them worried.

The reason by which we conclude that a mans moral views won't infringe upon his ability to be a good leader is itself seriously flawed. To many people he has already made two seriously bad choices in supporting abortion and gay agenda issues. Now we are asked to believe that he will follow with only useful choices that are for the good of the country. Yet another familiar slogan covers that kind of reasoning in Mr. Obama..."A Day Late and a Dollar Short."

Yes perhaps this is a time for change but it has becoming blatantly apparent that the change advocated by both Hillary and Barack Obama will only help the nation in its downward spiral.

Is there a solution to this dilemma? The only solution available is a one time event that is only a few months away; it is called "vote for someone else."

I would be remiss and untrue to my very calling if I did not point out this

salient fact. Jesus Christ was also a man that called for change. In fact he demanded it. The word repentance simply means to change or more specifically to change direction. The change Christ expected was a life changing turn that set men going in the opposite direction away from sin to a life of faith and obedience to God. This is a change that America and any nation still needs today.

The timeless, universal and clarion call from the creator of heaven and earth is as important today as when it was first heard. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." 2Peter 3:9

Lest I forget; his name is Jesus Christ and he approves this message.

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