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Thinking Clearly About 2008

The Upcoming Presidential Election Should Be All About The Supreme Court for Social Conservatives

By John Stemberger

Big Trouble

We are in big trouble. Whether you consider the historical cycle of presidential elections; the results of the 2006 election; the mood of the country; or the unfavorable ratings of the President, the odds are that conservatives will have our heads handed to us on a silver platter in 2008. Unless our movement gets its act together quickly and gets on the same page, one thing is for sure-- we are in big trouble.

No Perfect Candidate

Many conservatives are frustrated by the field of candidates running for president--and understandably so. There is no perfect candidate in 2008. There is no Ronald Reagan. Even the best of conservative candidates (announced and unannounced) have political warts. We have hawks with liberal views on social issues, recent conservative converts with questionable policy histories, and social conservatives with histories of personal moral failure and others just not able to mount a viable campaign or raise money. Whether the problems are policy, personal or political in nature, all the 2008 choices have considerable weaknesses. Folks, welcome to the fallen world in which we live. As Francis Schaeffer used to say, "Things are not as they *ought* to be..." Actually, there was one perfect candidate-but we crucified Him 2000 years ago.

Principled Pragmatism

As principled citizens how should we now respond? Whine and complain? Protest and not vote? Let a liberal win and hope to come back in four years? None of these options are the highest or most principled expressions of our citizenship. As social conservatives, we should always wrestle with how to reconcile the tension between principle and pragmatism. If we support only what appear to be front runner candidates, we will sell our souls to be political insiders. If we support only the purist long shot candidates, we risk foolishly forfeiting any realistic opportunity to affect public policy through political change.

All The Marbles Are For the United States Supreme Court

Most of all of the great culture war issues of our day can be directly traced to bad decisions by the United States Supreme Court. Consider this: duly elected legislative branches of government are not ultimately responsible for abortion on demand, legalizing same sex marriage, protecting pornography as free speech, removing faith symbols from the public square, and undermining private property rights. Instead, these moral and social ills are the responsibility of unelected, unaccountable members of the federal judiciary who refuse to recognize their limited and restrained role as jurists and

