

AlbertMohler.com

New “On Faith” Posting: Presidential Candidates and Their Religious Beliefs

Friday, January 26, 2007



The current question at “[On Faith](#),” published by *Newsweek* and *The Washington Post*, is this:

As the presidential campaign begins to take shape, do you think it is appropriate and or important for the candidates to express their personal religious views and to use religious rhetoric? Why?

In my answer, I argued that citizens have every right to know the deepest beliefs of those would would serve in high office. From [my article](#):

The U.S. Constitution demands that there be no religious test for public office. That means that the government cannot bar anyone’s candidacy on that basis. At the same time, voters use their own calculus when choosing candidates.

In my view, candidates should be as forthright and direct about their personal religious views as about any other question. Those who make too much of these beliefs risk appearing as a candidate for national preacher. Those who make too little of their beliefs risk appearing insincere and evasive. Those who seek to exploit their beliefs will do themselves political harm.

I think John F. Kennedy set an unfortunate example when he told a group of Baptist preachers in Houston in 1960 that his Catholicism would have virtually nothing to do with his presidential decision making. How could that be? I want to know how a political candidate makes decisions, weighs priorities, and gains strength in crisis.

We are not electing a national preacher; rabbi, imam, or priest, but we are electing a human being. As much as possible, I want to know what that human being believes at the deepest levels and how those beliefs form character, perspective, and political decisions.

Read the entire article [here](#) — and be sure to read the comments and articles by other panelists.

Content Copyright © 2002-2010, R. Albert Mohler, Jr.

