

September 2010

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When the Dust Settles

if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land. –2Chron 7:14

Midterm elections are usually interpreted to be presidential referendums—what voters think about America’s CEO, his policies, and his party. If national polls are to be believed, a majority of voters like President Obama personally, but strongly disapprove of many of his policies and intend to punish his party on November 2. Perhaps the upside is that fewer people at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue will pester the president to be a friend on *facebook*.

Republicans are appealing to voters vis-a-vis the “Pledge to America,” to return them to power so that the economy can be jumpstarted through tax incentives and less government borrowing and spending. They are also promising to do their best to stall implementation of several of President Obama’s massive social programs, including the widely unpopular new government health care law. But any attempt to neutralize the White House will require the addition of no fewer than 40 more Republicans (Rs) in the House and 10 Rs in the Senate. Political polls suggest that Republicans will likely take over the House. But the Senate?

Taking over the Senate is essential to the GOP because a near filibuster-proof 59-vote block has given Democrats the power not only to set the agenda, but to rubber stamp presidential appointments and foreign treaties agreed to by the Obama White House. In order for Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-KY) to become the next Senate Majority Leader, the GOP must successfully defend all 18 of their seats up for election and snatch 10 more from troubled Democrats.

At the start of this year, 37 U. S. Senate seats were up for election (19 Ds and 18 Rs), including a special election to fill the unexpired term of the late Edward (Ted) Kennedy of Massachusetts who died in August 2009. For Republicans, Mission Impossible. But that was before Scott Brown.

In a late-breaking turn of events, a band of brothers (and sisters) calling themselves the “Tea Party,” rallied enough financial support to make Brown’s campaign a national media event. The ensuing blowout election placed a Republican in a stronghold held by Ted Kennedy since 1962 causing even RNC officials to wonder if their redemption draweth nigh.

As if offered a PAT (point-after-try) another unusual situation has been presented to the minor league Republicans in West Virginia. In late June, 93-year-old Sen. Robert C. Byrd (D-WV) died in office. He was the longest serving U.S. Senator in American history, accruing 51 years and 18,000 votes in the Senate plus six years in the House. Byrd was known in and out of Washington circles as the “King of Pork” for his unrivaled success at directing federal dollars to the folks back home.

As a result of the unanticipated vacancy, the 18 available D seats have become 19 again—bad for Democrats but good for Republicans. Surprisingly, Harry Byrd’s old seat is considered competitive. Now all Mitch McConnell has to do is win 73% of the senate elections to prevail.

Pollsters think Republicans will easily defend their 18 seats but Democrats have only six sure bets among their numbers. At least five D seats are looking very Republican at the moment. Were elections held today, the D advantage in the Senate could easily decline from 59-41 to 50-45 (*Rasmussen Reports* says 50-46).

Remaining are four Democrat seats that have become “tossups.” The key battleground states are now Illinois, Nevada, West Virginia and Wisconsin. Although the races are said to be too tight to predict a winner, Republican challengers appear to be pulling ahead.

Competing for Barack Obama’s former seat in **Illinois** is Mark Kirk (R) who leads Alexi Giannoulias (D) 44-41. Sharon Angle (R) stands 48-48 against **Nevada’s** Harry Reid (D), and **West Virginia** voters are looking closely at John Raese (R) who now tops popular Democrat Gov. Joe Manchin 48-46. But the biggest unexpected potential gift to Republicans is shaping up in **Wisconsin** where come-from-nowhere businessman Ron Johnson (R) has surged ahead of the powerful incumbent Russ Feingold (D) 51-44.

A Republican win in all four tossup races would bring to 50, the GOP numbers in the U.S. Senate. But, unquestionably, a 51st seat is necessary to the Republican “Pledge to America.”

BLUE STATES AND BLUE-LEANING RACES, BUT.....

In **California**, incumbent Sen. Barbara Boxer (D) holds a slim lead over former Hewlett-Packard CEO Carly Fiorina (47-43). In **Connecticut**, Democrat Attorney General Richard Blumenthal is in trouble according to a September 28 *Quinnipiac* poll. His lead over rival Linda McMahon (R) has narrowed to 49-46 in the last few days. Blumenthal is a former stateside Marine Corps reservist who mistakenly remembered serving in Viet Nam and McMahon is the former CEO of World Wrestling Entertainment. Also in the shadows of possibility for Republicans is the interesting, if not wild **Delaware** race featuring one-time communist sympathizer Chris Coons (D) who leads (one time “bewitched”-now born-again) Christine O’Donnell 49-40.

But there is one more race out west that could, just could, provide a 51st solon. Dino Ross (R) in **Washington State** is statistically tied 47-48 in a matchup with the 18-year veteran Sen. Patty Murray. But locals are wondering if Dino covets the seat as much as Mitch McConnell does. Perhaps a little more steam could put this race in the Republican column on November 2.

We (the Christian Coalition) admit our fascination with geo-political things, but we do what we believe we have been called to do. Both “Testaments” direct us to choose godly leaders. Yet, when the dust settles, no acts of Congress can forestall what could become trumpets of judgment.

Our nation is in deep trouble but only 7% of adults think that moral issues underlie our problems. Since a majority of Americans profess to be Christians, and more than half claim to attend a place of worship once a month or more, this suggests that many who think they are following Christ are deceived. If they believe jobs and the economy are America’s chief concerns—they are following the world.

America desperately needs reproof and clear moral guidance—a task tailored for the Church. But it first needs a people who will stand in the gap.

On October 16, Pastor Ken Wilde with the *National Prayer Center* in Washington, DC, will be in Olympia to explain what Christians must do. Come hear a heart-pounding message from the underground in our nation’s capitol. For more information call us or email kenwildebanquet@gmail.com.

Isn’t it time we come together in prayer?

Rick Forcier