

"When people insult others for personal press, they degrade themselves and American politics." - Stacie Ruth Stoelting

By Stacie Ruth Stoelting

Today, America is experiencing another "shock and awe" campaign: a war of words.

Talking heads butt heads. Like attention-seeking little kids, they throw mud at each other. Politicians arm themselves with slurs and then spew out forced apologies. Candidates give canned apologies and then can members of their campaigns. 2008 has already included some childish behavior on all sides.

Can you recall Abraham Lincoln, George Washington, Ronald Reagan, or other favorite leaders interrupting people, disparaging others, and relishing the spotlight? I think not. They drew attention to the issues –not to themselves. Action accompanied words.

What every American should do is to return to dignified, efficient discussions and deliberations followed by applications thereof.

When people accomplish good things, attention follows. When people insult others for personal press, they degrade themselves and American politics. This occurs on both sides of the aisle.

How do we expect to get things done if we constantly seek attention to ourselves rather than the issues? Let's return to a few ideals:

- 1. Focus on the issues –not the insults.**
- 2. Call a cease-fire on slurs and attention-grabbing speeches.** Instead, arm yourselves with action and inspiration.
- 3. Be quick to hear, and slow to speak.** This is in the Bible, and it's for a good reason. (See [James 1:19](#).) When we listen, we attract attention, too. When words are fewer, people take greater notice.
- 4. Be clever, not cruel.** Ronald Reagan possessed the art. Did you notice how he said, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall" and not "Tear down Mr. Gorbachev"?
- 5. Make action the main objective.** Let us unite and make a difference. Don't let arguments, debate, etc. distract you from the main goal of taking effective action.

Today's political climate is so heated that D.C. feels like a desert. Let's splash some water on heated words. Let's return to good, clever debate with accompanying action.

