

What Would Jesse Say

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These days I am often asked “what would Jesse say,” concerning the election results and what appears to be a return to the liberal policies of the 1970s. Although Senator Helms would most certainly be disappointed, I doubt he would have been surprised. He would point out that we have far too often strayed from our principles on key issues in order to seek more political power. This has allowed the opposition to co-opt conservatives on important issues, like the need for fiscal restraint. Senator Helms would remind us that, although we should be willing to compromise our preferences, we should never be willing to compromise our principles.

Just as Senator Helms worked with President Clinton to reorganize the State Department, reform welfare and modify United Nations funding, we should look for ways to work with President Obama and Governor Perdue to strengthen our economy and protect American people. However, this does not mean we should compromise our conservative principles on the altar of bi-partisanship.

Senator Helms would urge us to be part of the “loyal opposition” in the fight against big government, tax-and-spend policies that are likely to dominate Washington and Raleigh. We must be willing to lead the fight for individual liberty, free enterprise, limited government, a strong national defense and strong families.

In every situation, we must do what the Senator asked his staff to do daily; determine the right course of action based on conservative principles, not on what is politically expedient. We must then have the courage of our convictions and be willing to fight for what we believe is right.

Senator Helms believed in the American people. He believed that if you offer them a true choice between conservative and liberal values, they will most often side with conservatives. After all, a recent Rasmussen survey found that 59 percent of the American people agreed with the sentiment expressed by Ronald Reagan in his first inaugural address: “Government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem.” And did not President Barack Obama campaign on a platform of tax cuts for up to 95 percent of Americans?

We must never give up and never become part of the problem we are trying to solve. As the Senator said on many occasions, “The good Lord does not require us to win every time – he just calls on us to fight.” And as the Senator proved so often in his thirty year Senate career, with a little perseverance and creativity, the seeds of victory often grow out of defeat.

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