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### July 30, 2008: Is Leah Daughtry a Phony?

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Title: Is Leah Daughtry a Phony?

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7/30/2008--Last week, in the New York Times Magazine, Daniel Bergner featured the efforts by Leah Daughtry, chief of staff to Howard Dean and Democratic Party Convention organizer, to make the Democratic Party more open to religious voters (7/20/2008). The article makes it crystal clear that Ms. Daughtry is a sincere religious believer. So, why do I ask whether she is a phony? Two reasons. First, although she may be sincere, her efforts may indeed be mere appearance rather than substance. In one telling example in the story, the "Faith in Action" team (3 evangelicals, a Catholic, a Muslim and a Jew—I am not making this up), which is trying to inject religion into the Democratic Convention, decided to have a prayer service to start the convention: "the service would be held in a theater, in neutral, secular space, so as not to offend anyone; the question was how to make the televised event look sacred." That is what is wrong with the whole effort. It is an attempt to make the Party look religious, without offending anyone who thinks politics should not be religious. This is the inconsistency that Senator Obama has been wrestling with all during the campaign. He runs on his Christianity, but still thinks in outdated constitutional categories of the wall of separation. (By outdated here, I only mean no longer representing a majority on the Supreme Court). Senator Obama is lucky no one has asked him whether the Ten Commandments can be posted in a courtroom. The second reason I ask whether Ms. Daughtry is a phony is her statement that "at this point in time" is the best way for her to be faithful to God's will is to work for the success of the Democratic Party. Now, I don't believe in Ms. Daughtry's God, so I should not have an opinion. But I do anyway. I promise you that the God of the Bible does not care which Party wins an election. Ms. Daughtry is using the same language that the Republicans do—the only way to be faithful to God is to vote a certain way. From the point of view of the Bible, all politics is a lie and all politicians are liars—voters too. I don't mean that all courses of action are equal. Far from it. But all these political institutions are human in a fallen world. Not one of them ever represents God's will. Only people can ever, and only sometimes, do that.