

Elton John's Attack on Missionaries Way Out of Tune

Sir Elton John is world famous, deservedly so. This billionaire singer/songwriter is one of the most creative talents we have. But when he attacks Christian missionaries in Africa and other Third World regions, his message is off-key. Instead of "Crocodile Rock," he's peddling a Crocodile Crock.

As a mega-star, Sir Elton is free to say whatever he likes. His native Britain and the U.S. are still free countries. But his belief that the worst thing about AIDS is the "stigma" attached to it is bizarre. We thought the worst thing about AIDS was the disease itself. Even here, however, Sir Elton is free to disagree with us.

What is wholly offensive, however, is that Sir Elton John's attack on Christian missionaries is being funded by U.S. taxpayers—Us!—and distributed to the very nations that are in dire need of help. This Voice of America video is titled "AIDS 2014—Living in the Shadows." It's a series of stories of truly terrible treatment of people suffering from AIDS, or survivors whose family members died of AIDS. There's nothing wrong with showing compassion for these desperate people.

There's a lot wrong, however, with John pushing the idea that the spread of AIDS is the fault of Christians, especially American evangelicals, who have "targeted Africa for 30 years." That included the born-again President George W. Bush. President Bush's PEPFAR initiative sent millions of dollars in U.S. foreign aid to AIDS-ravaged countries in Africa. President Bush saw this effort as an example of "compassionate conservatism." Others saw it as stemming from his Christian faith.

Bono saw PEPFAR as praiseworthy. So did former President Bill

Clinton. Even Clinton took care not to knock Christian missionary engagement in Africa.

As to Sir Elton's lending his fame and international prestige to an attack on Christian missions, what do any of these Christian missionaries teach about the gospel and fidelity within marriage that is different from what the Bishop of London taught the world at the wedding of Kate and William.

Elton John sat in the pew at Westminster Abbey for that beautiful event. He was joined by his partner. Neither man jumped up to protest when the Bishop described the importance of a lifelong commitment of husband and wife, and the joy of bringing children into the world. Was the Bishop's sermon—heard by billions throughout the world—a message of anti-gay bigotry? Of course not.

What evangelicals in Africa and the Third World believe about the purpose of sex within marriage is what the Bishop of London preached that sunny day in the Abbey. What these missionaries teach is what Jesus taught. And they are teaching it to those most in need of a healing ministry.

The world has just witnessed an amazing story of Christian missionaries facing death by Ebola for the sake of Christ. Dr. Kent Brantly and his colleague, Nancy Writebol, were airlifted from West Africa to Emory University to an isolation unit last week. Both of these Christian medical missionaries serve with Samaritan's Purse, the aid organization founded by Franklin Graham, the son of famed evangelist Billy Graham.

Both of these missionaries risked death to treat victims of another deadly plague.

This Elton John attack video—promoted by the Obama administration—could not come at a worse time. Throughout Africa, the Mideast and South Asia, Christians are suffering persecution worse than at any time since the 8th century. Daily, Christians are murdered, raped, tortured and driven

from their homes. They are ordered to convert to Islam, pay a *jizya* tax, or be killed.

In the face of this historic evil, the Obama administration's record of muted response and a blind eye is a shameful one. But worst of all, when Christians are being attacked, the government of the United States is weighing in with this bigoted video.

It seems the Obama administration's foreign policy—which is in total meltdown—consists of making the culture war a world war. Sir Elton John's participation in the Voice of America video is but the latest example of this administration's hostility to Christian practice and belief.

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