

Joel Osteen: Barack Obama Is a Christian

Considering Joel Osteen's well-documented acceptance of just about anyone who believes almost anything, it should come as no surprise that the senior pastor of the mammoth Lakewood Church in Houston believes President Obama's assertion that he is a Christian—despite his numerous unbiblical beliefs, such as “there are many paths to the same place.”

Osteen's comments came in an interview with Wolf Blitzer of CNN Friday on his news program, *The Situation Room*.

Osteen says he has been to prayer breakfasts and other events with Barack Obama and heard him express his faith, redemption and salvation.

“I just believe in my heart that he's a Christian,” Osteen said. “He says he is.”

“Again, I wouldn't try and push people away,” Osteen continued. “That's just the opposite of what we're supposed to do.”

Obama has gone on the record with numerous comments that seem to veer sharply away from the well-known tenets of Bible-based Christianity.

In a 2004 interview with Cathleen Falsani, Obama said that he “draw(s) from (his) Christian faith,” but then went on to talk about growing up with Eastern influences in Hawaii, Muslim influences in Indonesia, his father being an agnostic while his grandfather was a Muslim and finishing off claiming that he was mostly influenced by Judaism. However, he claims to be “rooted in the Christian tradition.”

Oh, really? Let's test that assertion against some of his

recorded comments:

- "I believe that there are many paths to the same place, and that is a belief that there is a higher power, a belief that we are connected as a people."
- "I'm a big believer in tolerance. I think that religion at its best comes with a big dose of doubt." What?
- "I'm suspicious of too much certainty in the pursuit of understanding just because I think people are limited in their understanding."
- "Jesus is an historical figure for me, and he's also a bridge between God and man, in the Christian faith, and one that I think is powerful precisely because he serves as that means of us reaching something higher."
- "(Jesus is) a wonderful teacher. I think it's important for all of us, of whatever faith, to have teachers in the flesh and also teachers in history."
- "I find it hard to believe that my God would consign four-fifths of the world to hell. I can't imagine that my God would allow some little Hindu kid in India who never interacts with the Christian faith to somehow burn for all eternity. That's just not part of my religious makeup."
- "(Sin is) being out of alignment with my values."
- "(If you have sin in your life) if I'm true to myself and my faith that that is its own reward, when I'm not true to it, it's its own punishment."
- "(I find spiritual inspiration in) the black church experience. A good choir and a good sermon in the black church, it's pretty hard not to be moved and be transported. I can be transported by watching a good performance of *Hamlet*, or reading Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon*, or listening to Miles Davis."

Mark Andrews is a veteran newspaper and magazine journalist, media strategist and author. His latest book is a Christian military thriller about U.S. pilots who violate orders to

undertake airstrikes in defense of Israel during a new Mideast war.