

What If We Listened to the 'Progressive' Christians?

For the last three years, liberal Christians have told conservative Christians that we were hypocrites for supporting Donald Trump. We were told that we betrayed fundamental gospel values, that we sold our souls in an attempt to regain political power, that we outright denied Jesus. These accusations, then, lead to an obvious question: Where would we be today if we listened to these "progressive" voices? Where would their counsel lead us? And are they themselves immune to the charge of hypocrisy?

Though I strongly differ with many of the doctrinal emphases of these liberal Christians, I don't for a moment believe conservative Christians have a monopoly on morality.

For example, when it comes to immigration, conservatives might emphasize the importance of maintaining order and protecting against terrorism. These concerns are certainly both biblical and moral.

Liberals, on the other hand, would emphasize compassion for the needy. This too is both biblical and moral.

As one of my colleagues once said, you need a right wing and a left wing to fly.

But what if conservatives had followed the example of these liberal Christians? Where would we be today?

Jim Wallis represents the left wing of evangelicalism, and as expected, he is a strident critic of Trump and of the Christians who support him.

For example, Wallis took strong issue with Jerry Falwell, Jr. calling Donald Trump a "dream president," stating, "But many

African-American, Hispanic and Asian American evangelicals are experiencing Trump's presidency as a nightmare; and the body of Christ around the world—which is overwhelmingly Christians of color—is utterly astonished that 81 percent of white American evangelicals voted for Donald Trump. That 81 percent number has become a dramatic international symbol representing a betrayal of the body of Christ and its commitment to racial reconciliation and justice.”

Yes, according to Wallis, white evangelicals voting for Trump represented a “crisis in the church.”

Indeed, in the opinion of Wallis (and many other “progressives”), “TRUMP EVANGELICALS are destroying the ‘evangel’—the ‘good news’ of Jesus Christ. . . .

“TRUMP EVANGELICALS,” he continues, “have so completely and uncritically offered their faithful allegiance to the man in the White House that they have compromised the gospel of Jesus Christ—whose values the president’s life has stood antithetically against.”

In keeping with these convictions, Wallis helped author the “Reclaiming Jesus” document.

It states that, “When politics undermines our theology, we must examine that politics. The church’s role is to change the world through the life and love of Jesus Christ. The government’s role is to serve the common good by protecting justice and peace, rewarding good behavior while restraining bad behavior (Rom. 13). When that role is undermined by political leadership, faith leaders must stand up and speak out. Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, ‘The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state.’”

Reading through this document, I found myself saying “amen” at point after point, since “Reclaiming Jesus” emphasizes some fundamental gospel truths. (I do not, however, concur with

every point.)

The problem, however, is with the application. How do these Christian leaders vote? What policies do they support?

By and large, they lean left and vote left, meaning they end up voting for Democratic candidates—in other words, for pro-abortion, pro-homosexual “marriage” candidates. That means they vote for candidates who support policies that put LGBT rights above religious rights. And they vote for candidates who support pouring millions of dollars into the coffers of Planned Parenthood.

For liberal Christians like Brian McLaren, whom I cited in my last article, if you do not support gay “marriage,” you’re not being Christian. Talk about turning things upside down.

Had we followed the advice of these leaders: 1) there would be almost no chance of overturning Roe v. Wade for another generation; 2) our religious freedoms would continue to evaporate; 3) our children would be forced to endure an increasingly aggressive LGBT agenda in their schools; 4) there would be less and less pushback to the intimidating, silencing tactics of the left. (This is just a short list of the most obvious concerns.)

That’s why I tweeted, “It’s ironic that ‘progressive’ Christians blast evangelicals who voted for Trump, calling us hypocrites. Yet they support pro-abortion candidates, they support radical LGBT activism and they often stand against Israel. Perhaps this is the pot calling the kettle black?”

It would have been one thing had these progressives said to us, “We share your moral concerns, but we have too many issues with Trump, because of which we are sitting out this election (or, voting for a protest candidate).”

But when they lambast us for hypocrisy while at the same time supporting policies and laws and standards that are in total

conflict with biblical values, they show themselves to be hypocrites. How does this glorify Jesus or advance the cause of the gospel?

I remain open to dialogue with my liberal Christian friends (to date, my attempts to reach out to Jim Wallis and some of his colleagues have failed). And, to repeat, I don't claim Christian conservatives are right on every point or without our own blind spots.

I simply want to emphasize that for liberal Christians to blast conservatives for their alleged hypocrisy is, in fact, hypocrisy personified.