

Should a Christian Vote for Barack Obama?

Editor's Note: *The below article responds to the Rev. Dennis Dillon, publisher of The Christian Times, who recently wrote an article called, "Why Christians Should Vote for Barack Obama." Mr. Dillon mentioned Bishop Mattera by name, attempting to rebut the Bishop's piece, "Why Do So Many Believers Shun Biblical Values While Voting?"*

Before I respond to Mr. Dillon, let me preface it by saying that I do not like using a pen to debate someone who calls himself a brother. I would rather be face-to-face. Despite our disagreements, I trust that he is an honorable man who sincerely believes that he best represents Christ. But because the article he published singling me out and encouraging Christians to vote for **Barack Obama** was both theologically ignorant and politically naive, I must respond.

Biblical Values?

First, Dillon gets into a word game over "biblical values" versus "Christ's righteousness," as though there's incongruity with the two. He puts me in the former category; him the latter. Of course, the righteousness extended through faith in Christ is a component of "biblical values," although, strangely, Dillon's point is to lump those who believe in "biblical values" with the Pharisees demanding that Jesus condemn the woman caught in adultery. He coupled this bizarre analogy by applying Greek definitions to the modern-day words *liberal* and *conservative*, with the ultimate point being, if you can believe it, that it was the "conservative" Pharisees who wanted the woman stoned, but Jesus, the liberal lion, extended her grace.

Like I said, the analogy was weird.

In any event, it's poor scholarship to prove a point using the original Greek meaning of a word while isolating that very same word from context in which it was used. In this case, the word *liberal* understood today does not even remotely refer to the liberty we have in Christ (John 8:31-36) because the liberty we have in Christ is never disconnected from virtue; it means having the freedom *not* to sin.

The contemporary use of the word *liberal*, however, refers to people who identify as pro-abortion, are proponents of same-sex marriage, wish to purge religion from the public square, favor an activist role for the federal government and demand high taxation.

Meanwhile, to suggest, as Dillon did, that the word *conservative* is code today for protecting the racist and ungodly status quo that Jesus confronted is beyond preposterous. As any Political Science 101 student grasps, I used *conservative* to describe a political philosophy that respects the involvement of Judeo-Christian values in our culture, a position that should be non-controversial for any Bible-believing Christian.

Besides, to imply that Jesus would not uphold the moral law of God because that would make him pharisaical ignores the fact that Jesus said he didn't come to abolish God's law, but to fulfill it (see Matt. 5:7, 17). And if that weren't enough, Jesus said that our righteousness must be greater than that of the Pharisees if we are to enter the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 5:20). The context of this passage demonstrates that Jesus' use of *righteousness* is based on upholding the law, which has to do with what he taught from Matthew 5:21-7:29 regarding obeying that law from the heart and not merely with outward form and rituals.

In Dillon's use of the woman caught in adultery, what he failed to note is that Jesus not only forgave her but also told her to "go and sin no more" (John 8:11). I suppose Jesus

was a narrow-minded, self-righteous Pharisee, huh?

Liberal Economics

Second, Dillon says that **conservative Christians** are “dogmatic, anti-poor, pro-war” and shouldn’t even call themselves Christians. Yep, the same guy ranting about dogmatism one minute ago actually says that not following his own reflections on Jesus makes the Christian Right, er, un-Christian. Let that one sink in for a minute.

Back in the real world, under Barack Obama’s presidency there are now more people on food stamps than ever before, the **unemployment rate** is higher today than when he took office, the employment participation rate is lower and the poverty rate is soaring. And in the black community, unemployment remains double the national average, towering at a staggering 14.3 percent.

Is this the Rev. Dillon’s idea of eradicating poverty—by creating millions more poor people?

Bottom line: Barack Obama’s policies are a disaster by every economic metric.

Dillon should also cut back the lectures on “war,” seeing that this president ramped up drone kills, aided military strikes in Libya and continues a war in Afghanistan for no good reason.

A Biblical President?

Third, Dillon argues that Barack Obama quotes the Bible often—a “religious pioneer” if you will. **Mitt Romney**, however, is a professed Mormon. Enough said, we’re told. So let’s see how our noted theological president sold **same-sex marriage** to ABC News: “[Michelle and I] both practicing Christians and obviously this position may be considered to put us at odds with the views of others but, you know, when we think about our faith, the thing at root that we think about

is, not only Christ sacrificing Himself on our behalf, but it's also the Golden Rule, you know, treat others the way you would want to be treated."

Who knew, Jesus Christ was the first same-sex marriage advocate.

Obama's also extreme on **abortion**. He favors it in every single trimester (partial-birth abortion, too) and even opposed the "Born Alive Infant Protection Act," which was a law granting rights to babies of botched abortions in Chicago.

To say that Barack Obama is a Christian simply because he calls himself one or quotes Scripture also ignores the facts that:

- We are not voting for the best Christian or best theologian, but for a president. I would rather have a qualified unbeliever in the Oval Office who better represents my values when it comes to public policy than a so-called Christian who pushes anti-Christian legislation. Mitt Romney's Mormonism is as about as irrelevant to the presidency as JFK's Catholicism was 50 years ago.
- Barack Obama has stated publicly that there are many roads to heaven, which violates John 14:6, where Jesus said He is the only way, as any toddler in Sunday school knows.
- Jesus said in Matthew 7:21 that, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but He who does the will of My Father in heaven." God looks at deeds, not just creeds.

God and the Government

Fourth, and probably the most unfortunate point made by Dillon, is that "government needs to back off and stop seeking to legislate morality." In Dillon's mind, it's wrong to "impose God's laws upon the government and infuse the

government's laws upon the people." That's why he doesn't get worked up about a baby's brains getting sucked out at **Planned Parenthood**.

He writes: "Abortion is biblically wrong, but so are the efforts to take away a woman's right to choose."

Do you think Dillon would care if we kept that same logic, but just replaced some words?

Let's try it: "Slavery is biblically wrong, but so are the efforts to take away a man's right to property."

You see, no government can remain neutral morally. The question becomes: *Which standard will a government adopt—one rooted in Judeo-Christian precepts or one rooted in secular humanism?*

Thankfully, we as a society aren't conflicted about "imposing" that Commandment of "Do Not Steal" as the law of the land.

Scripture, Abortion and Same-Sex Marriage

Fifth, Dillon says he doesn't classify abortion and same-sex marriage as deal-breakers because of Obama's godly stance on myriad other issues. Hilariously though, the political positions he references are in large part discredited by Scripture itself.

He writes: "Jesus would solve the problem of gun violence and most of the murders in America by ridding our country of guns that were solely manufactured to hurt people." Eh, doubtful. Jesus told his disciples in Luke to sell their cloak and buy a sword (22:36).

And this: With Jesus, "there would be no death penalty until the final judgment." I think Dillon's "Jesus" has a big beef with the apostle Paul, who told the Romans that government does not bear the sword in vain (Rom. 13:4). Dillon must also take issue with God Himself as quoted in Genesis 9:6. That's

where God first instituted human government after the flood and mandated capital punishment for those who deliberately shed innocent blood.

So there is that.

Dillon then serves up a party platter of left-wing talking points that, he argues, Jesus supports: And these goodies include President Obama's overhaul of health care (which covers abortion), amnesty for millions of illegal aliens, progressive taxation, business regulations and the anti-war attitudes regarding Iraq.

Oddly, Dillon doesn't offer an opinion about Guantanamo Bay, eminent domain, the gasoline tax and whether or not the boardwalk on the Jersey Shore should be rebuilt after Hurricane Sandy. That's too bad. I'd love to know Jesus' thoughts on all those issues, too, since we're ascribing such specificity to the Good Lord now.

The truth of the matter is that the Bible is a holistic document, one that gives us principles for all of life. But many in the body of Christ today do not possess a biblical worldview. And as such, they rearrange the roles that God clearly ordained for the church and that which he set aside for civil government, they confuse the imposition of morality with the imposition of salvation—and in the process of renewing their hearts, they forget to renew their minds.

I can't speak to the personal relationship that either Mitt Romney or Barack Obama has with Jesus Christ. But deciphering which of the two operates closer to a biblical worldview? Please. Even Blind Bartimaeus knows that answer.

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