

Subject: Chuck Baldwin's Dec. 15 Food for Thought from the Chuck Wagon

I Am A Conservative Christian, And The Religious Right Scares Me, Too

By Chuck Baldwin

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For those readers who are unfamiliar with my biography

(<http://www.chuckbaldwinlive.sketch.html>), let me here provide a thumbnail sketch of my conservative bona fides:

I attended, graduated, or received degrees from fundamentalist Christian schools such as Midwestern Baptist College in Pontiac, Michigan, Thomas Road Bible Institute (now known as Liberty Bible Institute at Liberty University) in Lynchburg, Virginia, Christian Bible College in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, and Trinity Baptist College in Jacksonville, Florida.

I am currently in my thirtieth year as the Senior Pastor of the Crossroad Baptist Church (Independent) in Pensacola, Florida. I was the Executive Director of the Florida Moral Majority in the early 1980's. I was an active member of the local Christian Coalition.

I have marched and protested against abortion clinics. I have led several pro-life rallies and even led our church to construct A Memorial To Aborted Babies. I have conducted small and large (some drawing crowds numbering in the thousands) pro-life, pro-family rallies and meetings in the Pensacola area and in many towns and cities across the state of Florida.

When Ronald Reagan was running for President, I helped Dr. Jerry Falwell register more than fifty thousand new conservative voters in my state. I have attended White House functions with former President Reagan and former Vice President George H.W. Bush.

I supported and defended Chief Justice Roy Moore and his fight to display a Ten Commandments monument at a pro-Ten Commandments rally in Montgomery, Alabama and even on national television.

I am an annual member of the National Rifle Association and a life member of Gun Owners of America. I have been the featured speaker at several pro-Second Amendment rallies.

No one can honestly question my commitment to pro-life, pro-family, conservative causes. That being said, the Religious Right, as it now exists, scares me.

For one reason, on the whole, the Religious Right has obviously and patently become little more than a propaganda machine for the Republican Party in general and for President G.W. Bush in particular. This is in spite of the fact that both Bush and the Republican Party in Washington, D.C., have routinely ignored and even trampled the very principles which the Religious Right claims to represent.

Therefore, no longer does the Religious Right represent conservative, Christian values. Instead, they represent their own self-serving interests at the expense of those values.

It also appears painfully obvious to me that in order to sit at the king's table, the Religious Right is willing to compromise any principle, no matter how sacred. As such, it has become a hollow movement. Sadly, the Religious Right is now a movement without a cause, except the cause of advancing the Republican Party.

Beyond that, the Religious Right is actively assisting those who would destroy our freedoms. On the whole, the Religious Right comports with those within the Bush administration and within the Republican Party who, in the name of "fighting terrorism," are actually terrorizing constitutional protections of our liberties.

The Religious Right offered virtually no resistance to the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, the passage of the Patriot Act, or the recently created position of National Intelligence Director. Neither did the Religious Right offer even a whimper of protest as President Bush and Republicans in Congress created a first-ever national ID card in the new intelligence bill, which eerily has more in common with early Twentieth Century German and Russian intelligence institutions than anything envisioned by America's Founding Fathers.

Another disconcerting feature of today's Religious Right is its attempt to Christianize political entities which it supports and to demonize political entities which it opposes. This trend is especially scary.

When people are told that they are voting "Christian" by voting for Republican Party candidates, it is being intimated that they are voting non-Christian by voting for any other candidate. This is not only silly on its face, it is downright dangerous!

I don't remember anyone saying people voted "Christian" when they elected the outspoken Christian candidate, Jimmy Carter, President. Yet, Carter, in his personal life, demonstrated as much, if not more, Christianity than does George W. Bush. If you recall, Carter even taught Sunday school in a Southern Baptist Church while President.

However, in spite of the fact that President Bush and the Republican Party in Washington, D.C., have repeatedly supported copious unchristian (not to mention unconstitutional) programs and policies, Christians act as if Bush and his fellow Republicans have ushered in the Millennial Kingdom.

More than that, the Religious Right appears to believe that G.W. Bush is the anointed Vicar of Christ. But instead of wearing the garb of a religious leader, he wears the shroud of a politico and a military commander-in-chief.

As such, in the minds of the Religious Right, Bush's war in Iraq is a holy crusade. America is fast taking on the shape of the old Holy Roman Empire and President Bush is quickly morphing into a modern day Caesar.

The willingness of the Religious Right to give President Bush king-like subservience is easily seen in the way they demonize anyone who dares to oppose him. This is very unnerving.

Are we heading for a modern day religious inquisition, this one led not by the Catholic Church but by the Religious Right? Are we witnessing the type of marriage between Church and State that America's founders originally feared?

I used to believe that liberals were paranoid for being fearful of conservative Christians gaining political power. Now, I share their trepidation.

Of course, the sad truth is, neither George W. Bush nor the Republican Party in Washington, D.C. represents genuine Christian or even conservative principles. If they did, they would take their oaths to the Constitution seriously and then neither liberals nor conservatives would have anything to fear, for the U.S. Constitution protects the rights and freedoms of all men.

Unfortunately, when the seed of Bush's unconstitutional policies come to fruition, it will produce large scale fallout economically, socially, and politically. And sadder still will be that, instead of blaming Bush's infidelity to constitutional government and conservative principles, people will blame Christianity and conservatism itself. The result of this miscalculation will doubtless be a massive tide of support for more and greater unconstitutional government, but only under a different name.

C Chuck Baldwin

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