

If Jesus was a Liberal How Can Any Christian be a Conservative?

A Transcript of a Commentary by Ambrose I. Lane, Sr.
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And top of the morning, this is We Ourselves, I'm Ambrose I. Lane Sr, you know I've been listening to all these religionists spread disinformation across this land and across the whole world. And I thought maybe I should share with our listeners something we did several years ago so they can get a picture of what this so-called Christianity is supposed to be all about. I wrote a little thing called, "If Jesus was a Liberal, how can any Christian be a Conservative?" And all the Christians who are running their mouths saying they are conservatives. So, let's deal with this. Let's first define some terms. We're going to define Christian, Conservative, and Liberal and all of these are taken from Random House dictionary.

Christian, it's an adjective, (1) of, pertaining to, or derived from Jesus Christ or his teachings. (2) Of, pertaining to, or adhering to the religion based on the teachings of Jesus Christ.

A noun, (3), a person who believes in Jesus Christ, an adherent of Christianity and (2) a person who exemplifies in their life the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Now, what is a Conservative? A person disposed to preserve existing conditions, institutions, etc and to resist change. A person who is conservative in principles, actions, habits, etc.

Liberal, (1) favorable to progress or reform as in religious or political affairs. (2) free from prejudice or bigotry. (3) open-minded or tolerant, especially free of or not bound by traditional or conventional ideas, values, etc. (4) a person of liberal principles or views.

Jesus has been defamed, his word, life and teachings have been twisted and bastardized and trivialized. In his name, oppression has been justified, yet the Bible say that in His name all oppression shall cease. In His name the plight of the poor has been rationalized. Even a number of presidents of these United States, beginning especially with Ronald Reagan have tried to rationalize poverty by quoting Jesus' words "that the poor you have with you always." They conveniently neglect to finish the quotation, confident that his lazy and their lazy and relatively comfortable listeners would not really care to hear the full quote and would care less what Jesus meant. What Jesus said was, "for you have the poor with you always and when so ever you will, you may do them good, but me you have not always." Now this was written when Jesus was about to be betrayed up to the rulers to be killed. And he was eating in the house of a man afflicted with leprosy, a woman brought to him with spikenard, an ointment and poured this ointment on his head. Some who were sharing the meal became outraged that such expensive ointment would be so wasted, because they said, "it could have been sold and the money given to the poor." Jesus' response was to tell them to leave her alone, because what she was doing was good. "She was simply," he said, "anointing my body to the burying."

That's in Mark 14 chapter, 8th verse. In short, he was soon to die and God had lead him to her, and lead her to come afore hand to prepare him, the son of God for burial. That's the way the Christians believe. Nowhere in that passage in that full quotation can be found any rationalization or justification for poverty or for failure to help the poor. Yet, beginning with President Reagan, a number of presidents have misused

that partial quote to do just that, as have other persons in prominent public positions, especially preachers who know better.

The years beginning in the 70s, have produced an American explosion of public distorters of Jesus' words. Most of whom carry the red, white & blue, patriotic banner of born-again Christians. Most notable are these electronic preachers who spread their distortions world-wide on radio and television. And most of these distorters carry a second patriotic banner labeled conservative. Many others claim membership in the religious round table, the moral majority, and its successor, and other such high-sounding groups. But since a Christian by definition is supposed to be a follower of Christ, his or her claim to be a Christ-follower must be measured against what Jesus did and taught. If Jesus' words and actions were conservative, then those who claim they are his followers and carry a conservative banner are right. But, if Jesus' words and actions were in fact liberal, then those who claim to be his followers and carry a conservative banner are wrong and are misleading millions who want to be true followers of Jesus Christ.

Now, as we analyze the words and actions of Jesus, it should be clear that no attempt would be made to actually label Jesus, he can't be label. The labels conservative and liberal are simply man's definitions of shades of thinking and acting. The former relates to thoughts and actions leaning towards preservation of the status quo and the latter relates to thoughts and actions leaning towards progressive change of the status quo. In light of these definitions let us examine Jesus' words and actions in a number of important areas.

Women; in Jesus' day women had no rights. They were almost, how should I say it, they were slaves. The words of the U.S. Supreme Court in the 19th century, Dred Scott case dealing with the rights of Black Americans could be appropriately paraphrased. "Women had no rights that a man had to respect." In Jesus' day men were advised to talk very little to their wives, much less to any other women. Women had to avoid mens' company in public and were restricted in worship to a place called, the forecourt of the temple. They were categorized as slaves and they had to pray the prayer that slaves were encouraged to pray. Only husbands could normally get a divorce, by the simple issuance of a rid divorce leaving the woman disgraced. And if caught in adultery, women were to be stoned to death, now it takes two to tango. The man wasn't stoned to death, he wasn't punished at all.

Now, did Jesus' words and actions tend to preserve, support or conserve the justification of that status quo for women? Or did they promote progressive change? In other words, were Jesus' words and actions conservative or liberal? Well let's see, women in contrary to custom and the status quo openly traveled in public with Jesus and his disciples. Read Luke 8th chapter, first three verses, it reads, "and it came to pass afterward that He went throughout every city and village preaching and showing the good tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with Him and certain women which had been healed of evil spirits and affirmatives. Mary called Magdalene out of whom went seven devils and Joanna the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their resources."

Jesus also opposed divorce. Can you imagine the rage and consternation this caused among the men of his day? Men could almost shed wives at will or at their pleasure, and except under exceptional circumstances women had no defense. Yet, Jesus opposed divorce Mark 10:2-9 tells the story, "*when the Pharisees tried to set a trap for Jesus by asking him whether it was lawful for a man to put away his wife. Jesus answered with a clear "No."* He told them that Moses had let them do it only because of the hardness of your heart. And he concluded this matter with his answer in these words well known to Christians today. "What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." Were those the

words of a conservative trying to conserve and justify an unjust status quo? Or were those the words of a liberal trying to progressively change an unjust status quo?

If you read this passage from Mark, as well as, Luke 16:18 you must conclude that Jesus' words are clearly liberal. Jesus respected the intellectual capacities of women, Luke 10:38-42 tells the story of how Mary, the sister of Martha in whose house Jesus stayed in an unnamed village, chose to listen to the Word rather than busy herself with woman's work. When Martha complained to Jesus, he told her that Mary had chosen the good part. The one thing which is helpful – the Word. And in death at Jesus' burial and immediately after his resurrection, women were prominent. All contrary to custom and the status quo, you might want to read Mark 15:40-41 & 47 and Mark 16:1-6 women were also sent by, “a young man sitting on the right hand, right side of Jesus' now empty tomb, clothed in a long, white garment” to tell Jesus' disciples to go to Galilee to meet the resurrected Jesus. Moreover, Jesus chose, according to Mark to appear first after the resurrection---- to a woman. Mark 16:9, “now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene out whom he had cast seven devils.”

These are not the words and actions of one who wanted to conserve the status quo contempt that men of Jesus' day had for women, rather they are the opposite words and actions designed to openly challenge the injustice of the status quo. Jesus even refused to condemn a woman caught in the very act of adultery. Read John 8:1-11, the scribes and Pharisees brought such a woman to Jesus in the temple and challenged him with these words, “Now Moses and the law commanded us that such a woman should be stoned. But, what sayest thou?” Now that was a serious challenge.

Would this pretender, the Scribes and Pharisees thought, dare to contradict the giver of the law, Moses himself? If Jesus had wanted to conserve the status quo all he had to do was support the law, instead he told his questioners, “He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.” Equally important, when all the woman's accusers had shame faces that left without stoning or further condemning her, Jesus said, “neither do I condemn thee.”

Now Jesus' treatment of the woman caught in adultery was consistent with his treatment of another woman labeled a moral cripple by society. Remember, the Samaritan woman that Jesus met at the well? Read Gospel of John 4:1-42 for the full story. Suffice it to say, that in the view of the Jews of Jesus' day, Jesus' behavior at the well was grossly out of line. First, he talked to a Samaritan. Second, this Samaritan to whom he talked was a woman. Third, this Samaritan woman was immoral according to custom, a sinner of sinners. Fourth, he chose this immoral, Samaritan woman to reveal his identity as the Christ and did not condemn her. Even the disciples themselves asked, “what kind of man was this Jesus?”

Here was a woman who not only had had five husbands, but in today's vernacular, was then 'shacking up' or living in with a sixth man, not her husband. With such a woman, Jesus not only held a long public conversation, but actually asked her for a drink of water. Worse yet, he told her who he really was, revealing his divinity. Knowing she would spread the Word. In short, Jesus chose a scandalized woman according to community standards to do his and God's work and will. Nothing Jesus did with this woman contributed to conserving the status quo, quite to the contrary, his words and actions were revolutionary--- liberal. Not one whiff of conservatism could be detected.

Now to listen to many of today's preachers, you would never believe that Jesus was so revolutionarily liberal so much committed to women's liberation. Some preachers today not only oppose women as

clergy, but even prohibit women walking in the pulpit area of their churches, unless they want to have a woman come into the pulpit and drape a cape around their shoulders after they preach a sermon.

Can anyone imagine this revolutionary liberal Jesus doing that? Or today opposing the ERA, or preaching that a woman's only place is in the home? Can anyone imagine Jesus publicly agreeing with our Caesar sitting in the White House opposing the ERA and suggesting that the State should take the lead in eliminating laws and practices that discriminate against women instead of himself taking action? How can anyone imagine Jesus publicly or privately supporting the women's rights views of a Phyllis Schlafly or the so-called 'new right Conservatives', God forbid. In short, Jesus' entire relationship with women in word and in deed would make him the first century's most prominent and famous women's liberator. A woman's liberal, as some conservatives would probably label him today, a liberal, not a conservative.

What about people who are handicapped? Now in Jesus' day, a person that was handicapped or sick, he or she was solely responsible.

According to the so-called wisdom of the day, he or she was sick or handicapped because of sin. If the sick or handicapped person had not sinned, then some ancestor's sins were responsible for the sickness or handicap, or so they reasoned. Persons afflicted with leprosy belonged with the dead and had no place among the living. These were the popular beliefs when and where Jesus carried on his ministry. Now did Jesus' words and actions support a conserved system of beliefs? Quite to the contrary, the entire ninth chapter of John tells the story of Jesus' rejection of the idea that handicap and sicknesses are caused by sin. In fact, Jesus answered a direct question in this regard. His disciples ask about the cause of blindness of a man they passed. "Master," they asked, "who did sin, this man or his parents that he was born blind?"

Jesus answered, "neither hath this man sinned or his parents. But, that the works of God should be made manifest in him." What a reversal in thinking. According to Jesus, a handicap represented not sin, but an opportunity through which the works of God himself might be manifested. Here was a direct challenge to the status quo. Now Jesus did more than just simply heal this blind man, he healed him on the Sabbath Day, another challenge to the status quo. And when John the Baptist sent two of his disciples to Jesus, to confirm that he was He that should come, Jesus gave them interesting proof. He told them go back and tell John that they had seen the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them. In short, Jesus was telling John that only the Christ would come to serve these of society's outcasts, these sinners, these rejects, these untouchables, these neglected ones that people gladly pass by. Now the best people of Jesus' day looked on the handicap as persons to avoid, even the Monks of the community that produced the Dead Sea scrolls. Devout men excluded from their community certain classes of persons, prohibited were and I quote, "no madman, or lunatic, or simpleton, or fool. No blind man, or maimed, or lame, or deaf man, and no minor shall enter into the community." Just the opposite of Jesus, their view represented the status quo the conservative point of view.

Well, what about children? Well in Jesus' day children had no rights and no privileges. They were truly to be seen and not heard, like women they had no business in the presence or company of men without permission. Did Jesus' words and actions support this conservative status for children? Well, if the Bible accurately reflects how Jesus thought and acted, he supported a different liberal point of view. Jesus often used children as examples for adults to follow, read Matthew 18:2-10, 19:13-14, Mark 10:13-16, and Luke 18:15-17. A reading of these passages will demonstrate that Jesus held children in high esteem, was gentle with them and warned of dire consequences that would befall those who would abuse or despise them.

When his disciples were abusive to people for bringing children to him, Jesus rebuked them. He told them, "for such is the kingdom of heaven."

In fact, according to Jesus even the angels of children seem to have greater access to God than other angels. As He said in Matthew 18:10, "take heed that you despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father. Which is in heaven." Now how about that for breaking new ground? Children are people Jesus was saying they're not cattle, they're not inanimate objects, they have inherent value and are even favored by God. So, you men Jesus was saying had better be careful that you do not bring down on your heads the very wrath of God, by mistreating them and devaluing them. Was that conservative or liberal? Clearly, liberal.

Given just these three examples, once one again is forced to wonder how any Christian, especially any Christian minister or preacher can be anything but a liberal. Since Jesus was liberal, in fact, he might easily be called one of the leading, better yet, the chief among liberals of his day and place. How can a follower of Jesus a Christian be what he was not, and conservative he was not. Yet today, throughout our country and much of the world, we observe Christian shepherds, ministers and preachers and their flocks advocating conservatism proudly sometimes loudly these shepherds come into our homes through electronic media selling today's conservative beliefs and nostrums as if they had the authoritative weight and approval of Jesus Christ himself. Yet the teachings and actions of Jesus Christ were almost 180 degrees different in substance and tone from many of those claiming to carry his mantle.

Just a few examples complete the picture. Jesus did not align himself with any political party or with the establishment with the rulers. He was neither a Pharisee, a Sadducee, an Essene, a scribe, nor a Rabbi and had no connection with the Romans occupying his country. In fact, he spent a great part of his public ministry trying, for the most unsuccessfully, to convince them that their orthodoxy imposed unacceptably heavy burdens on the people. The biting prose of Matthew 23 for example was a decidedly critical reason that leadership of the political parties, religionists all, and the Roman occupiers decided his death was required.

Too many of today's preachers, ministers contrary to Jesus' example have aligned themselves with today's Pharisees, roughly the Democrats minus theology, with the Sadducees, roughly the Republicans also minus theology, and the Establishment, big business. In fact, many of the so-called new right Conservative preachers have joined in forming a group called the religious round table, the religious counterpart of the older business round table formed by our nation's big business leadership. And of course, the preacher's round table is being financially supported by big business.

It is impossible to imagine Jesus or his disciples participating in such a group. It's easy to imagine the biding words he would direct their way. Jesus never tried to sell any of the public policies economic or otherwise of the high priest or of the Roman occupiers to the people. He was not a tool of either the economic or military oligarchy; to the contrary, he spoke out against the injustices their policies and practices inflicted injustices that made life harder and harsher for the people. Too many of today's preachers seem to glory in running behind the iron fence at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave, official home of our nation's Caesar, the White House, to lend the support of their titles to public policies often burdensome to the people.

Can any Christian really imagine Jesus doing that even in one's nightmares? Can any Christian imagine Jesus going to King Herod or Pontius Pilot or to Caesar himself, to volunteer to be their agent to sell their

war or defense policy to the people? Well, one prominent TV preacher went to President Reagan and so volunteer. And after being briefed by the president's advisors this TV preacher conducted a nationwide TV broadcast and assured the people that God's word revealed to him that the world would not have nuclear war for a thousand years. Can you picture Jesus doing what that preacher did? I know if I could, I could no longer be a Christian, if I believed in what that preacher said.

More recently, TV preachers have become more and more the mouthpieces for Caesar's war policies. Another very prominent TV preacher in 1985, visited the fascist right-wing terrorist group calling themselves the Contras in Central America. This TV preacher told his TV audience that he believes that helping the Contras was God's will. Maybe these followers have a direct pipeline to God, I would suspect however that the pipeline to the wealth of the capitalists is a most reliable. Now these were quite clearly not in agreement with today's conservatives on the issue of prayer in the schools. Warning his disciples about being hypocrites, Jesus told them, according to the Matthew 6, "When you pray, go inside your inner room or enter into your closet (King James version) and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret." "Hypocrites", said Jesus, "love to pray standing in the synagogues and the corners of the streets that they may be seen of men. Don't do like these hypocrites."

Now that directive by Jesus is plain and clear, no equivocation there. Your now so-called conservative brethren are telling the American people that America will crumble into corruption without a Constitutional amendment to encourage a mandate public individual and group prayer in our schools. Many of these so-called Conservatives claim to be fundamentalists, who also claim to believe, all of the Bible----literally. Literal beliefs and actions don't match, or else we'd have a lot of closets full of praying fundamentalists, instead of TV, radio, and street corner prayers. But there is something even more puzzling. Not only are these so-called Conservatives advocating doing the opposite of what Jesus directed, but they're asking today's Caesars to give the people legal secular permission to pray in public. How can any Christian, especially a Christian clergyman advocate getting secular approval from today's Caesars to communicate with God, especially in a manner not prescribed by Jesus?

Given Jesus' words, can anyone picture Jesus campaigning for this Prayer Amendment? Such a mental picture would itself be obscene. That would be rendering unto Caesar what is God's, not what is Caesar's. Many of these so-called conservative clergy advocates tell us, "that daily public individual and group prayer in the schools will help reduce societal immorality. Maybe even help stop the increase of pornography", well maybe the brethren have something there, but history doesn't support them. In fact, American history could be read in just the opposite way. From the 1700's in this country, every school day in almost every school public and private, began with prayer, most with scripture reading as well. Later the pledge of allegiance to the flag was universally added to this daily morning ritual. Yet for more than another century and a half man's most immoral, abominable and yes pornographic institution slavery continued unabated.

And American slavery was the most vicious in man's recorded history. And after slavery officially ended only following the debilitating civil war, thousands of American Christians lynched blacks across the land. The New York World newspaper of December 7, 1899, Pearl Harbor day 42 years earlier, reported of one such lynching in Maysville, Kentucky. The headline read, "Roasted Alive". After describing the barbaric and inhuman tortures inflicted upon the mob's 20 year black victim while he was burning at the stake the article read in part, "the population of the whole city and country from miles around, church men and

women, professional and businessmen of eminence, people of distinguished ancestry formed the mob. And not a single regret for the horrible tragedy can be heard tonight from one end of the town to the other.”

“Long after most of the mob went away little children from 6-10 years of age carried dried grass and kindling wood and kept the fire burning all during the afternoon. Relic hunters visited the scene and carried away pieces of flesh and the Negro's teeth; others got pieces of fingers and toes and proudly exhibit the ghastly souvenirs tonight.”

Can anything be more pornographic than this? Well, there are at least 5,000+ recorded instances of such obscenities, such terrorism, and such pornography in this country. And one cannot believe safely say that every participant who was a student, a former student, was also a school prayer, a participant in public, individual, and group school prayer sessions. Each was probably also a school public scripture reader and a pledger to the allegiance to the flag. The ghoulish, inhuman, vicious, insane and pornographic thinking reflected in this mob behavior resurfaced a few years ago when right-to-lifers tossed a dead fetus on the table at a press conference of their opponents.

It is also reflected in the symbolic pornography of Rev. Jerry Falwell's hustling of lapel pins of as he says, “exact replicas of the feet of a fetus.” Can any Christian imagine Jesus tossing a real, dead fetus or even a fake fetus or hustling fetus feet lapel pins as these right-wing so-called Christians and conservatives have done?

In the historical context in which Jesus lived what individuals and families could not do for themselves was performed by the tribe, often through the temple or theocratic infrastructure. Over the centuries, in part because of the massive increase in population and the related increase in needs, secular government has replaced the tribal or theocratic structure in providing services and caring for the afflicted. Giving only the accounts we have of Jesus' ministry can any Christian imagine Jesus railing against government programs to serve the poor, the unemployed, the handicapped, the sick, the elderly, the children, racial or religious minorities. Remember Jesus' actions and words regarding minorities of his day Samaritans and Syro-Phoenicians. Can anyone imagine even in one's worst nightmares, Jesus today advocating more nuclear weapons and fewer food stamps? More money for MX missiles and less money for housing for the poor and elderly? More money for bombers and less money for school breakfasts and milk for poor children? More money for tanks and less money for Medicare/Medicaid? More money for tobacco subsidies, while reclassifying ketchup as a vegetable. One would think that such an imagination could only be produced by a triple dose of a combination of cocaine, hashish and LSD.

Yet, many of today's so-called Christian born-again and almost all of our new-right, so-called Christian conservatives appear to have had sufficient mind-bending to advocate these things as if following Jesus' direct orders. Can there be any doubt that Jesus would today be publicly warning our Pharisees (democrats), our Sadducees (republicans) and our armies of scribes (lawyers and lobbyists)? Can there be any doubt that he would be saying things like, “Woe to you democrats, republicans, phony conservatives, and big business lobbyists because you devour widow's houses even while for a pretense, you call for a phony new federalism. Woe to you democrats, republicans, phony conservatives and hypocrites, for you serve Mammon, the god of greed and wealth and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law; justice and mercy and love and service to the least among you. Woe to you serpents, you brood of vipers. How can you escape the sentence of Hell when you tie up heavy loads and lay them on the shoulders of the poor? Woe to you, you electronic preachers who say that money you receive to help the poor is

corban, that is to say given to God, an excuse for keeping the money yourselves, thereby denying the poor the help they need. Woe to you, you hypocrites, for you do all your deeds to be noticed by men. For you love to put on morning suits and flowing preacher's robes and backwards collars. And you love the place of honor at banquets, and political fund raising rallies and covet invitations to Caesar's White House while you neglect the needy. But for a pretense, you call for a constitutional amendment for school prayer and legislation against school busing, and for tuition tax credits while either supporting or remaining silent about inaction on unemployment and the usurious interest rates driving people to poverty, bankruptcy and foreclosures. You blind guides, you false prophets, you right-wing radicals and fascists posing as conservatives who strain at a gnat and swallow a camel."

Can anyone doubt Jesus would disown today's phony preachers and cowardly pretenders? Can anyone doubt that He would similarly disown today's so-called conservatives? Would He not see them all as enslavers of man, as false teachers, and in the words of Peter, "as springs without water and mists driven by storm for whom the black darkness has been reserved." Or in his own words wouldn't Jesus repeat what he said almost 2000 years ago, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord have we not prophesied in thy name? In thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name have done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you. Depart from me ye that work inequity."

Beware false prophets that come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. Since Jesus the Christ and all his words and actions while on this Earth, was what man defines as a liberal, how could any follower of Christ, a Christian be a conservative? Think about it.

Now one of the reasons I brought that back, was I read about a book titled, "With God on Our Side: One Man's War Against an Evangelical Coup in America's Military" by Michael L. Weinstein and Davin Seay. And what I read about it was,

Under the "boy emperor" George W. Bush, we have entered the dark ages in earnest, pursuing a shortsighted path that could only accelerate our decline. What we are now seeing are the obvious characteristics of the west after the fall of Rome: the triumph of religion over reason; the atrophy of education and critical thinking; the integration of religion; the state and the apparatus of torture-a troika that was for Voltaire the central horror of the pre-Enlightenment world, and the political and economic marginalization of our culture.

Add to this the pervasive hostility toward science on the part of the current administration and we get a clear picture of the Enlightenment being steadily rolled back. Religion is used to explain terror attacks as part of a cosmic conflict between good and evil rather than in terms of political process. Manichaeism's rules across the United States. According to a poll taken by Time magazine, 59% of Americans believe that John's apocalyptic prophecies in the Book of Revelations will be fulfilled. And all of these believe that the faithful would be taken up into heaven in the Rapture.

Fundamentalism and democracy are completely antithetical when the former attempt to engage the machinery of the state to further its parochial biblical world view. The opposite of the Enlightenment of course is tribalism, group thinking, more and more this is the direction in which the United States going.

With God on Our Side: One Man's War Against an Evangelical Coup in America's Military shines a klieg light on one of the most elite educational institutions in the world, the United States Air Force Academy, which from its inception has attracted the best and the brightest, producing outstanding leaders, not only in the military but throughout American society.

Michael Weinstein, founder and president of militarily religious Freedom Foundation, and his family have a long tradition of service in the United States Armed Forces. However, Weinstein is now waging a different kind of war. With support at the highest level, evangelical groups within the military believe that serving your country requires the priorities of the military personnel to be in the words of the Officer's Christian Fellowship, *a spiritually transformed U.S. Military*, literally with ambassadors for Christ in uniform and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Weinstein and other American patriots see the evangelicals' intrusion into military operations and affairs as an affront to the Constitution, they were sworn to uphold.

Ten thousand cadets and staff at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado opened up their federally funded newspaper and see an ad solicitation signed by hundreds of academy senior officials and their spouses unabashedly proclaiming, we quote "we believe that the only real hope for mankind if Jesus Christ."

Cadets are bombarded with official command encouragement to see the movie *The Passion of Christ*, and stridently, sectarian fliers are strategically placed at every cadet's seat for three straight days in the academy dining hall. The Air Force Deputy Chief of Chaplains tells a New York Times reporter in a front page story that it is now official, U.S. Air Force policy "reserve the right to evangelize the un-churched.

Who is exactly are the un-churched and who decides? These disturbing developments have been a call to arms to Michael Weinstein. Now, this awfully important, he said in an interview with the Washington Post July 2006, he said,

Let me make it clear, I would shed my last drop of blood to defend their right to hold their biblical world view. But, I will not accept my government telling me who are the children of a greater god and who are the children of a lesser god. That's a difference I will not defend. I will fight them tooth and nail, and lay down a withering field of fire, and leave sucking chest wounds, if they engage the machinery of the state which is what they are doing."

A vitally important book at a critical time in our nation's history *With God on Our Side* is the story of one man's courageous struggle to thwart a tsunami of evangelism permeating America's military and to prevent a taxpayer funded theocracy in which only the true believers have power. Besides sticks and stones thrown at him, Michael has been reviled by the fundamentalist Christian right and has been given many names by his evangelical enemies.

“When a country goes to war, it sends a cargo of good and bad men and women; the vast majority of whom have fine, noble and heroic sensibilities. And unfortunately, a minute minority of sadists and criminals sneak in, the country then pours this entire mixed bag of people into another society. The point is that war is an inferno and so spiritually and physically catastrophic for both sides, that it must never be allowed to be manipulated by an unconstitutional cabal of evangelical zealots and mindless so-called patriots.” - Newswire Services Book Review

Get the book if you can, *With God on Our Side: One Man's War Against an Evangelical Coup in America's Military*. It's like the military under this Bush administration has gone insane.

We'll see you later. Take care.