

# **CHRISTIANS EAT LIONS IN 2004 ELECTION**

**By Don Feder**

Here's one for Ripley's Believe-It-Or-Not: The Democrats have spent decades making life miserable for Christians. On Election Day, Christians returned the favor.

Since at least the mid-1970s, the Democratic Party and its allies have devoted themselves to alternately sneering at and savaging Christians.

They've depicted the followers of Jesus – evangelical Protestants and traditional Catholics in particular – as superstitious degenerates, bigots, trailer-park misogynists, both sexually repressed and hypocritically lecherous, and a gang of Torquemada wannabes who constitute a clear and present danger to democracy and the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The only problem the left seems to have is in deciding whether Christians are more Elmer Gantry or Elmer Fud.

They've derided their values, indoctrinated their children, given their teenaged sons condoms (and told their teenaged daughters how to get an abortion without their parents knowledge or consent), used their tax dollars to fund “art” like a crucifix submerged in a jar of urine, eliminated the mildest public expressions of faith, and tried to overturn 3,300 years of Judeo-Christian tradition by mandating gay marriage from the bench.

After all of this, the Democrats are shocked to discover that they aren't wildly popular in the Bible Belt. Where, oh where did we go wrong, they moan, as George W. rallies Christian support to become the first president since 1936 to win reelection and increase his party's representation in both houses of Congress.

The media believe Bush's opposition to gay marriage swept the president to victory. While the issue – and the presence of 11 traditional marriage ballot questions (all of which carried, with an average vote of over 70%) – clearly played a role in Bush's reelection, the war between the Democratic party and religious America extends far beyond the marriage debate.

To the amazement of The New York Times, 22% of voters told exit pollsters that they were motivated by “values” or moral questions – more than those who based their votes on the economy or the war on terrorism. Bush was endorsed by over 80% of values-driven voters.

White evangelicals pulled the Republican lever by 78% to 21%.

The phenomenon cut across denominational lines. Running against the first Catholic presidential candidate (at least in name) since 1960, Bush won the votes of 51% of Catholics. In Florida, Catholics voted for Bush over the alleged altar boy, 55% to

45%. In Ohio, Catholics who attend services weekly chose Bush 62% to 38%. Who says Republicans don't have mass appeal?

As a general rule, in the 2004 election – the more a voter went to church, the redder he got.

Those who never attend religious services voted for Kerry over Bush, 62% to 36%. The Massachusetts Senator – who vowed he would never make a policy decision based on an article of faith – also carried those who went to church a few times a year (54% to 45%).

Bush got the support of voters who visit a house of worship a few times a month (50% to 49%), once a week (58%) and more than once a week (64%). For the Democratic Party, churchgoing America is enemy territory.

It wasn't always so. Formerly, Catholics loyal to Rome were a bedrock of the Democratic Party. Once upon a time, it was easier to find a Protestant in Dublin than a Republican at a Knight of Columbus meeting or a gathering of the Ancient Order of Hibernians.

Likewise evangelicals. In that bygone era, the Bible Belt was cinched around the waist of the party that nominated William Jennings Bryan three times. Born-again Christians helped to keep the South solidly Democratic.

The great political awakening started in the 1970s, when the Carter administration attacked the tax-status of Christian schools. A milestone was reached in 1980, when Ronald Reagan told a gathering of evangelical pastors in Dallas: "You can't endorse me, but I'm going to endorse you."

For observant Catholics, a sure sign that they were *persona non grata* in the Democratic Party came at its 1992 nominating convention. By then, the party had become so dogmatically pro-abortion that then Pennsylvania Governor Robert Casey was denied an opportunity to address the convention because of his pro-life position.

Ron Brown, the convention's organizer, told the popular governor of one of the 10 largest states, "Your views are out of line with those of most Americans." If "most Americans" is here defined as the subscription list of Ms. Magazine, Brown was correct.

In the latest evolution of liberal anti-Catholicism, Senate Democrats have established what amounts to a religious test for public office. Kennedy and his cohorts have announced that, no matter how qualified, a pro-life judicial nominee will be automatically rejected. They might as well hang a sign on the door of every federal courthouse in the land – "Catholics Need Not Apply."

The foregoing caused Charles J. Chaput, archbishop of Denver, to suggest that a Catholic who voted for Kerry should go to confession before he received communion.

The left seems to devote considerable energy to devising new and ingenious way to outrage, horrify, aggravate and otherwise annoy anyone who takes the Bible seriously.

Exhibit A is a 51-page study (“Beyond the Pledge of Allegiance: Hostility to Religious Expression in the Public Square”) compiled by the Liberty Legal Institute of Plano, Texas and presented to the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Property Rights In October.

According to the subcommittee’s chairman, Sen. John Cornyn (R, Texas): “The campaign to purge expressions of faith from the public square is pervasive, national and well organized. The report not only contains page after page and example after example of hostility to religious expression, it also notes how this effort to cleanse the public square of all religious expressions is carefully orchestrated and organized by some of the nation’s leading liberal special interests.” All of which are aligned with the Democratic Party.

Here are a few of the outrages documented in the pages of the report.

- In St. Louis, Missouri, a 12-year-old student was reprimanded for praying over his lunch.
- A public-school teacher in Houston punished two sisters for bringing bibles to class, confiscated the bibles and threw them in the trash and threatened to report their parents to the state’s Child Protective Services. At the same school, another student was forbidden to read a bible in his free time and forced to remove a Ten Commandments dustcover from a textbook.
- Public high school students in Lynn, Massachusetts were suspended for distributing candy canes with Bible verses attached.
- At a New Jersey veterans’ cemetery, a member of an honor guard, and a Vietnam vet, was fired for saying “God bless you and this family” to the family of a deceased veteran.
- In Logan County, Kentucky, a public library worker was fired for refusing to remove a cross-pendant necklace. She was later reinstated, by court order.

Among the chief culprits in this religious-cleansing campaign, the report names the American Civil Liberties Union, People for the American Way (PAW) and Americans United for the (so-called) Separation of Church and State.

Now, let’s see: which of the two major parties is more closely identified with the anti-God jihad? Who’s more likely to keynote the ACLU’s annual dinner, Rush Limbaugh or Bill Maher? This is an open-book exam, but the score will count toward your final grade.

The following is a sampling of postings on the PAW website : “Bush’s Judicial Threats,” “The Bush Administration vs. The Constitution,” “Bush’s Statement on Judges Demonstrates ‘Orwellian’ Doublespeak,” “Bush’s Tax and Budget Plans: Radical and Irresponsible,” and a fawning review of David Corn’s “The Lies of George Bush.” Despite the liberal assessment of their intelligence, Christians can connect the dots between assaults on the president and attacks on them.

Hollywood rarely misses a chance to ridicule Christians or denigrate their faith. The pathetic comedy “Saved,” just released on video and DVD – which is set in a Christian academy and makes religious kids look like Nazi nincompoops – is the most recent example of Hollywood’s contempt for Christians and their values.

But when devout Catholic Mel Gibson made a movie celebrating his faith (“The Passion”), both the producer and his work were subjected to withering attacks – including charges of anti-Semitism -- by critics and commentators.

The news media’s disdain for orthodox Christians was illustrated by a throw-away line in a front-page story in The Washington Post a decade ago. Reporter Michael Weisskopf contemptuously characterized conservative Christians as, “poor, uneducated and easy to command.” This is an ugly stereotype, akin to saying that poor, ignorant darkies like to tap-dance while eating fried chicken.

Said condescension was manifested again in the 2000 presidential election, when the president named Jesus as his favorite philosopher. You could hear the media guffaws – from the newsroom of The New York Times to the editorial department of The L.A. Times.

Senate Democrats have launched unprecedented filibusters to block Bush’s judicial nominations. Federal judges are overwhelmingly liberal (activist and elitist) and Democrats are determined to keep them that way.

The judiciary has led the frontal assault on faith.

Since 1963, it’s banished prayer from the public schools, rejected a moment of silent meditation (lest someone be encouraged to meditate on God), outlawed non-denominational prayers at graduation ceremonies and student-initiated prayers at football games, prohibited posting The Ten Commandments on school bulletin boards, ordered removal of Ten Commandments monuments, and come close to taking God out of the Pledge of Allegiance (required by the 9<sup>th</sup>. Circuit Appeals Court, reversed by the Supreme Court, on technical grounds).

At the same time, the Supreme Court or lower federal courts have struck down anti-sodomy laws and the most modest restraints on abortion, including parental-notification (again, in some jurisdictions) and attempts to ban partial-birth abortion. In Kerry country, the judiciary mandated homosexual marriage.

The courts are telling Christians: While we will not permit even symbolic affirmations of your faith, we have every right to force our faith on you.

In Academia, Christians are besieged. At least a dozen colleges and universities have withdrawn recognition of Christian clubs, for violating the school's non-discrimination code, by refusing to admit homosexuals and non-Christians as members – notwithstanding that to do so would violate the basic tenets of their faith.

From start to finish, the war on Christianity is a blue-country operation. It is relentlessly waged by the Democrats' core constituencies: the entertainment industry, journalists, the public education establishment (every four years, the endorsement of the Democratic nominee by the National Education Association is a pro forma matter), college administrators and the courts.

Christians would have to be masochistic not to revolt against this constant abuse, and totally lacking in discernment not to see it all leading to a nation where faith is marginalized, humanistic values are enshrined in government and the culture, and hate-crimes laws are used to punish dissent.

Evangelical Christians have been in the arena a long time. In terms of the values vote, the past election could be summed up by the following hypothetical headline: "In 2004: Christians Eat Lions."

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