

LEFT SHOWS ITS COMPASSION IN REACTIONS TO FALWELL'S DEATH

By Don Feder

Posted May 30, 2007

Because religious conservatives are hateful, the left has given itself permission to hate us.

In death, even the bitterest rivalries are softened. Speak no ill of the dead is an admonition nearly universally observed. For the sake of decency, there's a tendency to go easy on a fallen foe –at least temporarily.

Not for the left. Not when the foe was Falwell.

On May 15, Rev. Jerry Falwell – preacher, university chancellor, Moral Majority founder – departed this earthly existence at age 73. Many on the left could not contain their glee, which passed the border of the obscene and drove deep into the territory of ugly.

In a Sunday column, the predictable Frank Rich – political commissar at The New York Times -- wrote, “Mr. Falwell was always on the wrong, intolerant side of history.”

Not satisfied with attacking his views, Rich (whose existence demonstrates that God is not without a sense of humor), felt compelled to ridicule the man.

“Mr. Falwell had long been an embarrassment and laughingstock to many, including a new generation of Christian leaders, typified by Mr. Kuo,” Rich declared. David Kuo is the former head of Bush's office of faith-based initiatives who wrote a

book savaging the program. This qualifies him as an emerging Christian leader, over at The New York Times.

But the piece de slime was a May 18 column by Cathleen Falsani, religion writer for The Chicago Sun Times. Religion writers for the establishment media make their bones by attacking the religion of 70% of the American people.

Falsani (a charmer, to be sure) begins by disclosing that on hearing of Falwell's demise, "My first thought was not sympathy for his grieving family and friends, or for the students at Liberty University who surely were shocked by the sudden passing of the school's founder in his office on campus."

Rather, "my initial reaction to the Rev. Falwell's death was, and remains, relief – not unlike the ease I felt when a particularly nasty bully who used to spit at me on the playground and threaten to beat me up after school moved to another town. The Rev. Falwell was a spiritual bully. He was Tony Soprano to Pat Robertson's Paulie Walnuts."

Having tired of comparing Christian conservatives to Hitler or Genghis Khan, liberal commentators are reduced to reaching for the closest bad-guy culture reference.

To the observation of many who knew him that Falwell was affable and generous, Falsani retorted, "Tony Soprano would also make a charming dinner companion, sharing his lasagna and an expensive bottle of Orvieto while telling great stories and asking how your grandmother's doing in the home. And then he'd have you whacked and thrown over the side of his deep-sea fishing boat. But he'd send flowers to the funeral."

For the left, opposing abortion and same-sex marriage is the moral equivalent of having people whacked and thrown over the side of a fishing boat.

Just to be sure we didn't miss the point (at this point, hardly anyone could), Falsani elaborated: "I won't miss having to apologize for the insensitive, mean-spirited, sometimes downright hateful things the Rev. Falwell said in the name of Christ. I won't miss having to explain that not all evangelicals are like the Rev. Falwell, that not all of us are self-righteous, judgmental and holier than thou." The realization that she herself is "self-righteous, judgmental and holier than thou," is as far from Falsani's thinking as an original idea.

At last we come to the heart of the matter: "The Rev. Falwell's absence from this realm will mean one less voice telling my gay and lesbian friends that they are somehow less loved by God..."

To the best of my knowledge, Reverend Falwell never said that God doesn't love homosexuals, rather that He's less than thrilled about homosexual acts. The Rev. would also say that God loves adulterers and pedophiles – but not their sexual behavior.

Poor, Falsani. Even with Falwell gone, she will still have to apologize to her gay and lesbian (and bisexual and transgendered?) friends for Leviticus 18:22 and Romans 1:26, 27, Marine Corps General and Joint Chiefs Chairman Peter Pace (who said homosexuals shouldn't serve openly because the military must not "condone immorality"), the overwhelming majorities of American voters who consistently approve prohibitions on same-sex marriage, and Orthodox Jews, evangelicals and traditional Catholics who take the Bible seriously (as opposed to following the Oprah-annotated version Falsani reads).

Nearly all of the indictments of Falwell occasioned by his passing included the following:

1. He outed Teletubby Twinky-Winky. Actually, gay publications were chortling about it (the fact that a “gay role model” – with masculine voice, purse and reverse triangle -- had been foisted on pre-schoolers) for better than a year before Falwell wrote a piece for Liberty Journal, quoting a Washington Post story. By the way, isn't it time for a hate crimes law to end the bashing of Teletubbies based on their sexual orientation?
2. Initially, Falwell blamed 9/11 on feminists, abortion and homosexual activism – whereas all good progressives know that American imperialism, U.S. support for Israel and sanctions on Iraq were really responsible for the deaths of 3,000 Americans at the World Trade Center.
3. The Reverend once described Mohammed as “the original terrorist.” Oh, how unfair – just because he killed captured enemies, condoned the assassination of those who had offended him and founded a religion based on jihad. To protest this absurd slander, the Prophet's Indian followers rioted, killing a number of Hindus, and Iran's supreme religion-of-peace council called for Falwell's death.
4. Falwell once said the anti-Christ was alive and a Jewish male. (A man? Well, okay. But where did he get the idea that Hillary is Jewish?) Weigh this against the fact that he was the follower of another Jewish male, and made Benjamin Netanyahu look like the head of Hamas, in his support for Israel.

Above all, the left's goon squad loathed Falwell for standing up to it. Being the famous advocates of diversity that they are, liberals become unhinged when they encounter divergent views.

Prior to the Moral Majority in the late 1970s, the left had a monopoly on political expressions of faith. Clerics from the mainline churches loudly insisted that God: 1) hated white Southerners, 2) favored communist liberation movements, 3) demanded income leveling, and 4) thought Americans were greedy and unfeeling.

Then along came Jerry Falwell, Dr. James Dobson, Pat Robertson, Don Wildmon and others with a different message: 1) The annual slaughter of 1.3 million unborn children is displeasing to the Almighty, 2) America was founded on Judeo-Christian values and the further we stray from those principles, the worse things will get, and 3) that God wasn't doing stand-up comedy when he said that it's an abomination for a man to lie with a man as he would with a woman.

Worse, from the left's perspective, Falwell was effective. His words may have been jarring to the mainstream media, but struck a responsive chord with millions of evangelical Christians. At its high tide, the Moral Majority had 6.5 million members, raised \$69 million for political causes and played a key role in the election of Ronald Reagan.

Falwell took his Lynchburg, Virginia church from 36 members to more than 22,000, preached to millions on the "Old Time Gospel Hour," founded Liberty University (approaching its 4th decade, with 20,000-plus students) and established elementary schools, homes for unwed mothers and rehab centers – thus demonstrating his misanthropy.

It's not surprising that Falwell should reduce the left to sputtering rage. In a way, I imagine they'll miss having him around to hate.

There are haters on the left and right – and everywhere in between. But at least those on the right don't have the cheek to proclaim their love for humanity while sticking in the knife and twisting it.

Like the leaders of the Spanish Inquisition – who had their victims burned alive, allegedly to save their souls – leftists spew their venom in the name of humanity, humility and love.

A version of this commentary appeared on GrassTopsUSA.com