



Christian View of the News



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WHY YOU SHOULD VOTE

We are quickly approaching a vital time in our nation's history - the 2006 elections. The 2004 elections set in place some positive new trends among Christian voters, and we are looking for more of the same in the 2006 election cycle. This year, we will elect new U.S. representatives and senators who will not only represent us and our values, but who could change the face of the nation in regards to judicial appointments.

The media is well aware of what is at stake in our nation and has already been talking about the impact that values voters could once again have. Except, this time, their speculations are that many values voters will be, and already have been, tempted to sit out the 2006 elections. They say that we have accepted the popular idea that we should punish our elected officials by just staying home this November. While that notion may be present in the minds of some, we must see the greater picture -- who will we actually punish by staying home? Will it be the House and Senate -- or will it be our families, our friends and even our nation because we didn't get out to vote for the candidate who would best represent our values?

The notion that our Congress deserves "to be punished" in such a way is questionable at best. We must remember that we have seen them administer the appointment of two excellent Supreme Court justices, pass three laws adding further limitations on abortion, uphold the president's veto on embryonic stem-cell research, and appoint several dozen conservative judges in the lower federal courts.

This election cycle, evangelical Christians must prove rumors of decreased voter turnout incorrect and show up like they did in 2004 - setting record numbers this November. If you are concerned about important issues such as the sanctity of life, the Biblical definition of marriage, the freedom of religious expression, and passing more moral legislation, you have the opportunity to make a difference in your state -- and the nation -- this November at the polls. We must not accept the mainstream media's prevailing assumption that conservative values voters have already conceded defeat.

Needless to say, a shift in the current majorities would make things difficult for the final two years of President Bush's time in office. Most significantly, President Bush's ability to appoint conservative judges to the Supreme Court and other federal courts would be severely hampered if we lose any of our conservative senators, as all of these appointments would need approval of the Senate.

Given the heightened level of contention in judicial appointments, as exemplified in the hearings for U.S. Supreme Court Justices John Roberts and Samuel Alito, a Senate majority friendly to the president's appointments has become all but essential to the approval of future appointments. It is possible that neither Alito nor Roberts would have been approved had the conservatives not held a majority. A change in the Senate majority as a result of the fall elections would most likely

translate into the blocking of all of Bush's judicial appointments in his final two years, including the possible appointment of a third Supreme Court justice.

Indeed, it is highly possible that at least one justice will retire before the end of President Bush's term, thus enabling Bush to make his third appointment to the Supreme Court. John Paul Stevens, the senior member of the court, has hinted that since he was appointed by a Republican president, he feels that he ought to retire under a Republican president. This is tremendously important because Stevens has consistently ruled against family and traditional values during his time on the Court. Some even believe him to be the most liberal member of the court, consistently voting in favor of abortion and gay rights. If Stevens does in fact retire, it provides an incredible opportunity to replace a consistently liberal justice with a solid conservative -- one who would support our values. Yet again, if conservatives don't maintain a majority in the Senate, worrying about a possible Supreme Court appointment may well be a moot point. . . .

It would no doubt be a momentous victory to overturn *Roe*, lifting this federal protection of abortion and again allowing each state to determine its own laws. The first step toward this and any other victory is participation in the 2006 elections. We must retain a pro-life, pro-family, pro-values majority in the Senate, or this discussion of judges is quite possibly a vain debate. To retain this majority, Christians must be involved and vote this November! Consider what Charles Finney, great evangelist in the 1800s, cautioned: "The time has come that Christians must vote for honest men and take consistent ground in politics. . . God cannot sustain this free and blessed country which we love and pray for unless the Church will take right ground. Politics are a part of religion in such a country as this, and Christians must do their duty to the country as a part of their duty to God. . . He [God] will bless or curse this nation according to the course they [Christians] take [in politics]."

It is vitally important that Christians not become lax in their stewardship of the country God has given us. The implications of this election will last far into the next centuries and what we do at the polls this November may well determine the political and national destiny of our children, our grandchildren and their children. Heed well what the Rev. Matthias Burnett cautioned in 1803: "Let not your children have reason to curse you for giving up those rights and prostrating those institutions

What's Inside . . .

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which your fathers delivered to you." Remember to vote this November for the candidate who best represents your values. - David Barton, *AFA Journal*, 10/06

NOW NOTICE THIS: Having given good, positive reasons why Christians should vote on November 7, here are some negative reasons to do so. If Democrats win, the Speaker of the House, 3rd in line for the presidency, will be San Francisco liberal, **Nancy Pelosi**. She doesn't believe we are at war and wants to abandon Iraq immediately. She is the darling of the left on social issues and favors partial birth abortion, human cloning, and votes for anything the homosexuals want.

Senate Majority Leader would be **Harry Reid**, who has called President Bush a liar and a loser. He has filibustered judicial nominees and the Patriot Act and has promised to block the Bush agenda his last two years.

Ted Kennedy, darling of big labor, will also be in charge of the educational systems in America and health care, promising to do away with the prescription drug program and institute nationalized coverage, as Hillary tried to do.

House Judiciary Chairman would be **John Conyers**, who has the Impeachment of the President at the top of his list.

Pat Leahy would head the Senate Judiciary Committee and put an end to all conservative judges. Just this past year, Sen. Leahy voted to support a John Kerry-led filibuster of Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito. After Alito patiently responded to a seemingly infinite number of questions from a roll call of the far-left, which included Sens. Ted Kennedy, Russ Feingold (WI), Barbara Boxer (CA), and Chuck Schumer (NY), Sen. Leahy attempted to deprive Alito of the dignity of an up-or-down vote in the Senate.

This is just a sample of the nightmare the Democrats are planning for the country if they win. Keep this in mind when you vote. - N.P.

Tony Blankley says: While turning over the Congress to the Pelosi/Kennedy mob for even two years would be recklessly irresponsible -- particularly during a dangerous war -- there is no assurance the wilderness years would last only 24 months. . . .

Any conservative ought to be very concerned about who has the political power in Washington. The Democrats have virtually promised to scandalize the Republican administration (with subpoena and impeachment-seeking oversight hearings) for the next two years -- in preparation for defeating the 2008 Republican presidential nominee.

Moreover, every Democrat who beats a Republican in three weeks will have two years to feather his or her nest, and use the powers of incumbency to defeat the 2008 Republican challenger.

Even more important, in a closely fought 2008 presidential election, every extra Democratic incumbent senator, congressman and governor makes it just a little more likely that the Democratic presidential candidate may win that district or state. All those freshly turned new Democratic machines will help get out Democratic Party votes for the top of their 2008 ticket.

This current conservative petulance -- if it actually occurs on Nov. 7 -- will increase the chances of electing Hillary, or worse (if such a thing is possible) in 2008.

There is no rational policy or political basis for conservatives not voting. I'm not sure the country can take the current Democratic mob in power for long.

A realist once observed that the history of mankind is little more than the triumph of the heartless over the mindless.

The Democrats are obviously heartless. Conservatives must guard against falling into the category of the mindless. Ignore your heartfelt peevelements, use your brains and vote. - T.B., *townhall.com*, 10/18/06

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE

On Sept. 24, The *New York Times* printed a story breathless with insinuations: A classified "National Intelligence Estimate" (NIE) had concluded that the invasion of Iraq turned that country into a terrorist breeding ground. The U.S. left was jubilant.

The *Times* and the Democratic Party, though, had both run with out-of-context snippets. After an angry President George W. Bush ordered the "Key Findings" portion of the NIE declassified, readers (and voters) found these nuanced conclusions:

- "United-States-led counterterrorism efforts have seriously damaged the leadership of al-Qa'ida and disrupted its operations; however, we judge that al-Qa'ida will continue to pose the greatest threat to the Homeland and U.S. interests abroad by a single terrorist organization."

- "The Iraq conflict has become the 'cause celebre' for jihadists, breeding a deep resentment of U.S. involvement in the Muslim world and cultivating supporters for the global jihadist movement. Should jihadists leaving Iraq perceive themselves, and be perceived, to have failed, we judge fewer fighters will be inspired to carry on the fight."

- "If democratic reform efforts in Muslim majority nations progress over the next five years, political participation probably would drive a wedge between intransigent extremists and groups willing to use the political process to achieve their local objectives."

The left's attempt to cherry-pick the NIE failed miserably once people could read it for themselves -- but it did demonstrate again how those waging the war against the war manufacture the news to help their agenda of retreat.

That same Sunday former President **Bill Clinton** also seemed full of rage when he exploded at a few very mild inquiries about his pursuit of bin Laden in the '90s. Together with the real findings of the NIE and their attempted manipulation, the Clinton meltdown helped underscore the essential choice in the campaign of 2006. One party is serious about the war. The other party is not. - Hugh Hewitt, *WORLD*, 10/7/06

ACADEMIC DOPING & AMERICA'S PARENTS

What if you could improve your child's academic performance with nothing more than a pill? That is no longer a hypothetical question.

Parents naturally want their children to excel. Some parents are taking that natural desire to new lengths -- asking doctors to prescribe drugs like Ritalin and Adderall so their students -- especially teenagers -- will perform better on tests and assignments. The practice is spreading fast, and is now known as "academic doping."

MSNBC reports: "*Parents want their kids to excel in school, and they've heard about the illegal use of stimulants such as Ritalin and Adderall for "academic doping." Hoping to obtain the drugs legally, they pressure pediatricians for them. Some even request the drugs after openly admitting they don't believe their child has ADHD.*"

There appear to be several issues here. Some parents may want to blame a child's lack of academic performance on a medical condition. Others see the academic race for scholarships and college entry to be adequate reason to seek a chemical enhancement for their own kids. Parents of high achievers must wonder, "If he's doing this well

without Ritalin, what could he do with it?" In any event, the promise takes the form of a pill.

As ethicist Ronald Cole-Turner argues, we are now "enhancement enthusiasts" -- ready to try anything that promises enhanced human performance. But, at what cost? Where does this end? . . .

MSNBC: "And some pill-eager parents aren't just seeking to level the playing field, they're trying to make their kids superstars, says Dr. Martin Stein, a professor of clinical pediatrics at University of California, San Diego. . . .

"Privileged kids tend to have parents who will push them to be the academic cream of the crop and when they aren't, they'll start looking for reasons why, he says. "I tell them that honor roll, a merit scholarship or acceptance in an Ivy League school is not the end point. That would be poor medicine."

For Christian parents, this controversy raises a host of questions. How do we define success and achievement? Just what are our expectations for our kids? Are we really ready to put them on powerful stimulants, just to raise their grades and test scores? What are we teaching our kids when we do this?

The "academic doping" problem emerged first at colleges and universities, where an underground market in Ritalin, Adderall, and other drugs is never far from sight. Students believe, rightly or wrongly, that the use of these drugs can help them cram for a test and score higher grades.

Now, the problem has reached high schools. How long before middle schoolers are trading pills before a math test?

The twentieth century taught many lessons, and one of the most perverse of these lessons is this: Salvation is found in a pill. Got an infection? Take an antibiotic. Can't sleep? Take a sedative. Can't breathe? Take an antihistamine. Can't cope? Take a psychotropic pill. Can't perform sexually? Take Viagra. Can't keep up with other athletes? Take a steroid. Can't remember which pill you are to take for which problem? Take a memory enhancer.

Want your kids to do better at school? Give them Ritalin and Adderall.

This is the perverse and pervasive logic of our day. But salvation is *not* found in a pill. (How does this differ from an athlete enhancing his performance with steroids? - N.P.) - *Albert Mohler.com*, 9/26/06

DOES GOD WANT US TO BE RICH?

The cover photograph for this week's issue of *TIME* magazine just about says it all -- a picture of a Rolls Royce grille with a chrome cross as hood ornament. In the event anyone missed the point, the cover asks: "*Does God Want You to Be Rich?*"

Theological confusion takes many forms, but with this cover story, *TIME* directs us to one of the most pervasive perversions of the Christian Gospel in our times -- prosperity theology. The article, written by David Van Biema and Jeff Chu, is fair, balanced, and devastating.

As they explain:

For several decades, a philosophy has been percolating in the 10 million-strong Pentecostal wing of Christianity that seems to turn the Gospels' passage on its head: certainly, it allows, Christians should keep one eye on heaven. But the new good news is that God doesn't want us to wait. Known (or vilified) under a variety of names -- Word of Faith, Health and Wealth, Name It and Claim It, Prosperity Theology -- its emphasis is on God's promised generosity in this life and the ability of believers to claim it for themselves. In a nutshell, it suggests that a God who loves you does not want you to be broke. Its signature

verse could be John 10:10: "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." In a TIME poll, 17% of Christians surveyed said they considered themselves part of such a movement, while a full 61% believed that God wants people to be prosperous. And 31% -- a far higher percentage than there are Pentecostals in America -- agreed that if you give your money to God, God will bless you with more money.

Then:

*"Prosperity" first blazed to public attention as the driveshaft in the moneymaking machine that was 1980s televangelism and faded from mainstream view with the Jim Bakker and Jimmy Swaggart scandals. But now, after some key modifications (which have inspired some to redub it Prosperity Lite), it has not only recovered but is booming. Of the four biggest megachurches in the country, three -- Osteen's Lakewood in Houston; T.D. Jakes' Potter's House in south Dallas; and Creflo Dollar's World Changers near Atlanta -- are Prosperity or Prosperity Lite pulpits (although Jakes' ministry has many more facets). While they don't exclusively teach that God's riches want to be in believers' wallets, it is a key part of their doctrine. And propelled by Osteen's 4 million-selling book, *Your Best Life Now*, the belief has swept beyond its Pentecostal base into more buttoned-down evangelical churches, and even into congregations in the more liberal Mainline. It is taught in hundreds of non-Pentecostal Bible studies. One Pennsylvania Lutheran pastor even made it the basis for a sermon series for Lent, when Christians usually meditate on why Jesus was having His Worst Life Then., Says the Rev. Chappell Temple, a Methodist minister with the dubious distinction of pastoring Houston's other Lakewood Church (Lakewood United Methodist), an hour north of Osteen's: "*Prosperity Lite is everywhere in Christian culture. Go into any Christian bookstore, and see what they're offering.*"*

Yes, go into those bookstores if you dare. The consistent message you will find is that God wants you to be wealthy. Interestingly, health seems to have taken a back seat to wealth. Those described by Van Biema and Chu as "Prosperity Lite" preachers are unlikely to offer old-style healing services like those of Oral Roberts. It is material prosperity that takes center stage in their message.

The reporters lay out the basic theological and biblical issues, pointing to the anomaly of Christ's Gospel repackaged as material prosperity. They also try to place the prosperity preachers in a cultural and historical context.

If the rest of Protestantism ignored finances, Prosperity placed them center stage, marrying Pentecostalism's ebullient notion of God's gifts with an older tradition that stressed the power of positive thinking. Practically, it emphasized hard work and good home economics. But the real heat was in its spiritual premise: that if a believer could establish, through word and deed (usually donation), that he or she was "in Jesus Christ," then Jesus' father would respond with paternal gifts of health and wealth in this life.

The prosperity preachers find their roots in the Pentecostal tradition. The most famous among them -- like Joel Osteen and Creflo Dollar -- spread their messages through television and publishing. Osteen now dominates the field like no other, and he is front and center in the *TIME* article.

Prosperity theology is fueled by the combination of Pentecostal teaching and American consumerism. Our culture of material abundance (and consumerist appetites) is fertile ground for the emergence of this distorted and corrupted teaching. Jesus never promised His disciples material security, much less material prosperity. The benefits of the Gospel of Christ are redefined in terms of material and financial blessings.

The reporters quote one man who acknowledged the influence of Joel Osteen and his teaching:

"I'm dreaming big -- because all of heaven is dreaming big," [George] Adams continues. "Jesus died for our sins. That was the best gift God could give us," he says, "But we have something else. Because I want to follow Jesus and do what he ordained, God wants to support us. It's Joel Osteen's ministry that told me. Why would an awesome and mighty God want anything less for his children?"

Well. . . why would an awesome and mighty God want anything less for his children? The saddest aspect of that question is its focus on material prosperity at the expense of the limitless spiritual riches we are given in Christ. The problem with prosperity theology is not that it promises too much, but that it promises so little -- and promises that so falsely.

Of even greater significance is the eclipse of the authentic Gospel of Christ. The justification of sinners is ignored as material prosperity and wealth dominate the message.

TIME's cover story is a wake-up call. The fact that prosperity theology has *TIME's* attention should demand our attention. - *AlbertMohler.com*, 9/14/06

OSTEEN IN NO DANGER OF ARREST

Joel Osteen, pastor of the nondenominational Lakewood Church in Houston -- now the nation's largest congregation -- arrived in Boston last weekend for an appearance at the TD Banknorth Garden (also known as the Hub). Attendees paid \$10 per ticket to gain admission to the event.

But what caught my eye was a report in *The Boston Herald* about Mr. Osteen's appearance at a book signing at the Prudential Center's Barnes & Noble store prior to the event. He drew more than 400 persons to the book signing -- a crowd exceeded only by those who came for a similar event with former President Bill Clinton.

Look at this crucial section of the paper's report:

He's the most popular preacher in the country right now -- a best-selling author and the "most watched minister" in America.

But when asked yesterday about gay marriage during a trip to the bluest state in the land of the free -- and the only one where same-sex nuptials are legal -- the Rev. Joel Osteen suddenly got sheepish.

"I don't think it's God's best," the handsome Holy Roller said of homosexuality. "I never feel like homosexuality is God's best."

When pressed on the issue, Osteen said, "I don't feel like that's my thrust . . . you know, some of the issues that divide us, and I'm here to let people know that God is for them and he's on their side."

Put that alongside the fact that Stephen Green was recently arrested in Great Britain for passing out pamphlets that included Bible verses clearly declaring homosexuality to be a sin. Christians in many parts of the world now risk arrest for declaring openly what the Bible clearly teaches.

Mr. Osteen can be assured that his weak and evasive non-answer to this reporter's question will put him at very little risk for arrest. But then, pandering prophets are rarely at much of a risk from the public anyway.

There was no conviction in his answer; no clear declaration of biblical truth, no Gospel, no judgment, and no promise. Just a non-answer with a smile. Pathetic. . . simply pathetic. *AlbertMohler.com*, 9/8/06 (I think he is a sissy and this pretty much confirms it. - N.P.)

TBN CANCELS CRITICISM OF ISLAM

A long-running weekly TV program "Zola Levitt Presents," which is often critical of the jihadist ideology within Islam, has been

canceled by the Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN), producers say, because of efforts by TBN to cater to its growing audience in the Arab world.

The cancellation of this show makes it the second program cancelled by the largest Christian broadcaster because of sensitivities about Muslim content.

In January, 2006 Hal Lindsey's "The International Intelligence Briefing" notified TBN he would not be back because of what he considered to be efforts to muzzle his opinions about radical Islam. - *Christian News*, 9/18/06

THE BIBLE VERSION DEBATE

The following is excerpted from a doctoral dissertation by the late Alfred Martin (1919-96). The 1951 dissertation presented to the faculty of Dallas Theological Seminary's Graduate School was entitled "A Critical Examination of the Westcott-Hort Textual Theory." Martin was Vice President of Moody Bible Institute at the time. "In spite of the notable work of Burgon, Hoskier, and others who supported them, the opponents of the Westcott-Hort theory have never had the hearing which they deserve. How many present-day students of the Greek New Testament ever heard of the two men just mentioned, and how many ever saw a copy of *The Revision Revised* or *Codex B and Its Allies*, to say nothing of actually reading these works? . . . **The present generation of Bible students, having been reared on Westcott and Hort, have for the most part accepted the theory without independent or critical examination.** To the average student of the Greek New Testament today it is unthinkable to question the theory at least in its basic premises. Even to imply that one believes the Textus Receptus to be nearer the original text than the Westcott-Hort text is, lays one open to the suspicion of gross ignorance or unmitigated bigotry. That is why this controversy needs to be aired again among Bible-believing Christians. There is little hope of convincing those who are unbelieving textual critics, but if believing Bible students had the evidence of both sides put before them, instead of one side only, there would not be so much blind following of Westcott and hort." - *O Timothy*, 6/06

WILL THIS "ROAD SHOW" COME TO YOUR CITY?

Do you remember the fiasco in San Francisco at the Hamilton Square Baptist Church when ex-homosexuals were speaking about the grace of God in delivering them from such a wicked lifestyle (God calls it "abomination"), and the perverts staged a protest rally in front of the church? They not only blocked the entrance so no one could get in or out, but the police helped them and refused to do anything to help the folks inside the church.

Well, it happened again, this time at the other end of the country in the only State of the Union legalizing Sodomite marriages, Massachusetts. Focus on the Family was holding a conference in Boston at the historic Tremont Temple Baptist Church featuring ex-Sodomites, giving their testimony about the grace of God in their deliverance (it was called "Love Won Out"). Once again a "mob" (there is no other way to describe them) gathered outside the building, "terrorizing" the Christians, yelling, chanting, screaming, waving signs and blocking the church entrance. (An anti-war rally was being held a few blocks away led by Cindy Sheehan and participants from it joined the Sodomites.) The protestors had a sound truck and were using it to full advantage. As it turned out, they did not have a permit for either the rally or the sound truck -- both violations of the law. Yet they were there from the time the conference opened in the morning until it closed that night. The demonstration totally blocked off the street. Two cof-

fins were set up in front of the church, one saying "Homophobia is deadly."

What about the police? They were there too, and, as in San Francisco, took the side of the Sodomites. In fact, the police blocked the church entrance/exit and did not permit anyone to enter or leave the conference. When a lady participant at the conference asked why she couldn't leave, the response from the female officer was merely, "Because I said so." The police protection was only for the Sodomites. No one was arrested; no one even received a warning ticket!

One person attending the conference said, "The anger, rage and hatred were indescribable." If you would like a biblical picture of the scene, try the Sodomites outside the home of Lot, yelling, screaming, trying to break in and harm those inside.

Our conclusion: Sodomites have rights in America; Christians do not! - *The Biblical Evangelist in Plains Baptist Challenger*, 6/06

HONEST ATHEIST ANALYZES RELIGION

Sam Harris, author of *The End of Faith*, 2004's surprising best-seller, has emerged as the frontline opponent of all theistic faith. Now, he is out with a second book, *Letter to a Christian Nation*, and the gloves are off again.

"In *Letter to a Christian Nation*, I have set out to destroy the intellectual and moral pretensions of Christianity in its most committed forms," he announces.

Sam Harris is a philosophy graduate of Stanford University who has also studied neuroscience at the doctoral level. In his first book, he launched a broadside attack on theism. The time has come, he argued, to reject the toleration of backward and dangerous ideas -- such as theism. . . .

In *Letter to a Christian Nation*, Harris repeats many of his previous arguments, but in a more concise and urgent format. He is honest in setting out his agenda -- and he recognizes that he and the Christians he addresses share some common assumptions:

We agree, for instance, that if one of us is right, the other is wrong. The Bible is either the word of God, or it isn't. Either Jesus offers humanity the one, true path to salvation (John 14:6), or he does not. We agree that to be a true Christian is to believe that all other faiths are mistaken, and profoundly so. If Christianity is correct, and I persist in my unbelief, I should expect to suffer the torments of hell. Worse still, I have persuaded others, and many close to me, to reject the very idea of God. They too will languish in "eternal fire" (Matthew 25:4). If the basic doctrine of Christianity is correct, I have misused my life in the worst conceivable way.

One interesting facet of Harris's approach is his specific rejection of theological liberalism and moderating positions. He does see these for what they are -- thinly disguised forms of unbelief.

I have written elsewhere about the problems I see with religious liberalism and religious moderation. Here, we need only observe that the issue is both simpler and more urgent than the liberals and moderates generally admit. Either the Bible is just an ordinary book, written by mortals, or it isn't. Either Christ was divine, or he was not. If the Bible is an ordinary book, and Christ was an ordinary man, the history of Christian theology is the story of bookish men parsing a collective delusion. If the basic tenets of Christianity are true, then there are some very grim surprises in store for nonbelievers like myself. You understand this. At least half of the American population understands this. So let us be honest with ourselves: in the fullness of time, one side is really going to win this argument, and the other side is really going to lose.

In a 2005 address to the New York Society for Ethical Culture,

Harris put it this way:

Another problem with religious moderation is that it is intellectually bankrupt. It really represents a fundamentally unprincipled use of reason. At least fundamentalists talk about evidence. You ask a fundamentalist, "Why do you believe that Jesus was the Son of God and the Bible is the perfect Word of God?" and you'll get reasons. They're not good reasons, but you will immediately see that these people are engaged in an evidentiary pursuit. They'll say things like, "The New Testament confirms all of Old Testament prophecy for every prophecy in the Bible has come true." You know, these are specious claims, but contrast that to what moderates say. Moderates don't talk about evidence. Moderates talk about meaning. They talk about the good effects of believing as they do.

*Another problem with religious moderation is that it is theologically bankrupt. It is not like if we just read the books more closely we would discover all these reasons to be moderates. I've got news for you. I've read the books: **God is not a moderate.***

In the end, Sam Harris is certain, like so many opponents of Christianity before him, that the Christian faith will simply pass away.

"Religious faith -- faith that there is a God who cares what name He is called, faith that Jesus is coming back to earth. . . is on the wrong side of an escalating war of ideas," he insists. (He is right, there are two sides as he has indicated, but it is he who is on the wrong side. But I appreciate his honest distinction between Fundamentalism and liberalism. - N.P.) - *AlbertMohler.com*, 9/22/06

DOES SIN SELL?

A letter representing 78 Texas Ford dealers was sent to Ford's Detroit headquarters earlier this summer, urging the company to 'cease' advertising in homosexual publications. The letter acknowledged that a pro-family boycott is hurting their business. (*Baptist Press*, 8/10/06). Many of our fathers and grandfathers drove a Model T or Model A Ford until the V8s came out in the early to mid-thirties. Most of them would have joined these TX dealers, if for nothing else but to find out what homosexuality was. If they were still living, they could ask their 5-year-old great, great, great grandchild. They are taught a gay lifestyle in school. - *Plains Baptist Challenger*, 9/06

FORD AND WAL-MART GO GAY

Ford Motor Company is taking several steps to try to halt falling sales, but none of them include ending financial support for homosexual groups promoting same-sex marriage.

Ford lost \$1.4 billion in the first half of the year. Rather than saving money by cutting financial support to homosexual groups, Ford plans to cut production by 21% and trim the number of its dealers. The automaker is reportedly seeking a merger or alliance with another auto-maker, considering taking the company private, or selling their Jaguar, Volvo and Land Rover divisions.

"Chairman Bill Ford is putting the company's support for homosexual groups ahead of Ford's support for employees and dealers," said AFA Chairman Don Wildmon. "Dealers and employees should be calling Chairman Ford, asking him to stop supporting the homosexual agenda."

In early 2005, AFA began criticizing Ford's support of radical homosexual groups and its advertising in gay magazines which regularly condemn Christians and pro-family attempts to protect marriage. Last November Ford agreed to make several changes in its practices, but then reneged on the agreement after meeting with homosexual leaders.

Wal-Mart, the largest retailer in the world, has joined the Na-

tional Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce. The organization promotes homosexual marriage and other aspects of the gay agenda.

Although Wal-Mart has never excluded homosexuals from being employees, customers or suppliers, the company wanted to be more closely identified with promoting the homosexual agenda. Wal-Mart is now a corporate member of the NGLCC, and a Wal-Mart vice president will serve as an advisor to the group.

"For Wal-Mart to pursue a relationship with a gay advocacy group like this is to do nothing less than place the retailer's stamp of approval on the gay agenda," said AFA President Tim Wildmon. "Sam Walton must be rolling over in his grave." - *AFA Journal*, 10/06

(I am disgusted with the fact that so many national companies have given in to the pressures of the perverts and ended up supporting them. They do this under an implied threat of a boycott just as Jesse Jackson "rips off" companies in the same way.

A number of great companies were founded by Christians over the years: Men like Sam Walton, J. C. Penney, R. G. Letourneau, Truett Cathy, etc. It is often the children and grandchildren of the founders who don't have the convictions of their parents who cave in. I don't think that will happen to Chick-fil-A because Cathy set an example for his family, not just regarding business but more importantly loyalty to God, His Word, His Church and His Day.) - N.P.

BACK DOOR TO TERROR

Since Sept. 11, 2001, Americans living along the U.S.-Mexican border have been warning that our porous frontier is a back door for terrorist entry into this country. Local, State and federal law enforcement officers, overwhelmed by the flow of human traffic across the border, have acknowledged the threat -- and been widely ignored by the mainstream media and "official" Washington. Last year, in little-noticed congressional testimony, FBI Director Robert Mueller revealed that "individuals from countries with known al Qaeda connections have attempted to enter the United States illegally using alien smuggling rings and assuming Hispanic appearances."

Now, thanks to the investigative reporting of my colleague at FOX News, correspondent William Lajeunesse, the monarchs of the media and the potentates on the Potomac can no longer ignore reality. Lajeunesse took the time to carefully digest a new staff report prepared by the House Committee on Homeland Security. It ought to be required reading for every reporter and official in Washington, D.C.

Titled "A Line in the Sand: Confronting the Threat at the Southwest Border," the just-released report confirms what many have long suspected: Our border is a sieve, not a barrier, for radical Islamic terrorists transiting into the United States. The Investigations Subcommittee charges that from Sept. 11, 2001, to the present, hundreds of illegal aliens from countries "such as Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Pakistan and Afghanistan" were apprehended crossing into the United States.

But that's not all the bad news. Investigators also found:

- In June 2006, seven Iraqis were caught in Brownsville, Texas;
- In August, an Afghani man was caught crossing the Rio Grande into Texas;

- Mueller has testified that a Hezbollah cell had been "dismantled" after officials discovered that the terror organization was smuggling operatives across the U.S.-Mexico border to carry out terror attacks inside the United States.

- Individuals from countries with know al Qaeda connections have changed their Islamic surnames and adopted false Hispanic identities in order to escape detection and blend into American society.

- Radical Islamic groups that support Hamas, Hezbollah and

Islamiya Al Gamat are all active in Latin America.

All that is bad enough, but the bombshell -- as reported by Lajeunesse and confirmed in the congressional report -- is the role being played by Venezuelan strongman Hugo Chavez. It's well known that the oil-rich Marxist in Caracas has been busy spreading his anti-American "Bolivarian Revolution" throughout our southern hemisphere. But this investigation now concludes that Chavez's nefarious deeds go well beyond a weapons-buying spree and efforts to manipulate elections in Bolivia, Ecuador and Nicaragua.

According to the congressional report, "Venezuela is providing support -- including identity documents -- that could prove useful to radical Islamic groups. The Venezuelan government has issued thousands of cedulas, the equivalent of Social Security cards, to people from places such as Cuba, Colombia and Middle Eastern nations that host foreign terrorist organizations." These documents can be used to obtain Venezuelan passports and American visas, which in turn allow the holder to elude immigration checks and enter the United States.

Nothing in the report comes as a surprise to Rep. Tom Tancredo (R-Colo.). His new book, "In Mortal Danger: The Battle for America's Border and Security," is full of anecdotal information that substantiates the charges made by the House Homeland Security Committee staff. Tancredo notes that a group of Pakistanis were recently apprehended at the U.S.-Mexican border with fraudulent Venezuelan documents.

Somehow, most of this has eluded the crack journalists who purport to write and report "news" for our so-called mainstream media. Even Agence France-Presse took notice that al Qaeda had established a "clandestine travel service" south of the border to help move operatives into the United States. Though American pundits have been quick to accuse citizen organizations like the Minutemen of being "vigilantes" or worse, the people with the poison pens have paid scant attention to the realities contained in this report -- most of which was already in the public domain.

Doubters who cannot accept how essential it is to plug the holes in our southern frontier should read this report and wake up to a clear and present danger. For those who still have trouble understanding, the concluding lines of Section III on Page 32 should suffice: "Given the ever-present threat posed by al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations -- a threat that has been underscored by the recent events in London and the vulnerability of our borders -- the need for immediate action to enforce our borders could not be more apparent." (Maybe we are waiting for a "dirty bomb" to go off in a football stadium. - N.P.) - Oliver North, *townhall.com*, 10/20/06

B.C. AND A.D.: THE BATTLE OVER HISTORY

The Kentucky State School Board has placed itself at the center of an expanding controversy as it has debated replacing references to B.C. and A.D. with B.C.E. and C.E. in social studies materials.

Of course, B.C. refers to "Before Christ" and A.D. to *Anno Domini*, or "In the Year of Our Lord." The system for dating years is venerable and easy to understand -- and it is increasingly considered to be politically incorrect.

The issue, of course is the clear and unavoidable reference to Jesus Christ in the B.C. and A.D. date reference system. After all, the system takes its structure from the assumption that the incarnation of Jesus Christ is the central event of all history. The invention of B.C.E. for "Before Common Era" and C.E. for "Common Era" is nothing more than an attempt to avoid any reference to Christ. . . .

This system of dating has been in place for more than a millennium and a half, and its meaning has been almost universally under-

stood. But, the head of the Kentucky Council of Churches thinks it is "absurd" to suggest that this is an assault on Christianity.

The word "assault" may not be the right word to use here, but "insult" is just about right. - *AlbertMohler.com*, 6/2/06

IRAQ WAS A WORTHY MISTAKE

In the dumbed-down debate we're having, there are only two sides: pro-war and antiwar. This is silly. First, very few folks who favored the Iraq invasion are abstractly pro-war. Second, antiwar types aren't really pacifists. They favor military intervention when it comes to stopping genocide in Darfur or starvation in Somalia or doing whatever it was that President Clinton did in Haiti. In other words, their objection isn't to war per se' it's to wars that advance U.S. interests (or, allegedly, President Bush's or Israel's or ExxonMobil's interests). I must confess, one of the things that made me reluctant to conclude that the Iraq war was a mistake was my distaste for the shabbiness of the arguments on the antiwar side.

But truth is truth. And the Iraq war was a mistake by the most obvious criteria. If we had known then what we know now, we would never have gone to war with Iraq -- at least not the way we did. I do think that Congress (including Democrats Hillary Clinton, John Kerry, Jay Rockefeller and John Murtha) was right to vote for the war given what was known -- or what was believed to have been known -- in 2003. The claims from some former pro-war Dems that they were lied to strike me as nothing more than cowardly buck-passing.

The failure to find weapons of mass destruction is a side issue. The WMD fiasco was a global intelligence failure, though calling Saddam Hussein's bluff after 9/11 was the right thing to do. Washington's more important intelligence failure lay in underestimating what would be required to rebuild and restore post-Hussein Iraq. The White House did not anticipate a low-intensity civil war in Iraq, never planned for it and would not have deemed it in the U.S. interest to pay this high a price in prestige, treasure and, of course, lives.

According to the goofy parameters of the current debate, I'm now supposed to call for withdrawing from Iraq. If it was a mistake to go in, we should get out, some argue. But this is unpersuasive. A doctor will warn that if you see a man stabbed in the chest, you shouldn't rush to pull the knife out. We are in Iraq for good reasons and for reasons that were well-intentioned but wrong. But we are there.

Those who say it's not the central front in the war on terror are in a worse state of denial than they think Bush is in. Of course it's the central front. That it has become so is a valid criticism of Bush, but it's also strong reason for seeing things through. If we pull out precipitously, jihadism will open a franchise in Iraq and gain steam around the world, and the U.S. will be weakened.

Bush's critics claim that democracy promotion was an afterthought, a convenient rebranding of a war gone sour. That's unfair, but even if true, it wouldn't mean liberty isn't at stake. It wouldn't mean that promoting a liberal society in the heart of the Arab and Muslim world wouldn't be in our interest and consistent with our ideals. In war, you sometimes end up having to defend ground you wouldn't have chosen with perfect knowledge beforehand. That's us in Iraq.

According to the conventional script, if I'm not saying "bug out" of Iraq, I'm supposed to say "stay the course." But there's a third option, and funnily enough, I found it in an old column of mine. We should ask the Iraqis to vote on whether U.S. troops should stay.

Polling suggests that they want us to go. But polling absent consequences is a form of protest. With accountability, minds may change and appreciation for the U.S. presence might grow.

If Iraqis voted "stay," we'd have a mandate to do what's neces-

sary to win, and our ideals would be reaffirmed. If they voted "go," our values would also be reaffirmed, and we could leave with honor. And pretty much everyone would have to accept democracy as the only legitimate expression of national will.

Finishing the job is better than leaving a mess. And if we can finish the job, the war won't be remembered as a mistake. - *Jonah Goldberg, townhall.com*, 10/20/06

THE ENEMY OF MARRIAGE -- DIVORCE

Jamie Dean of *WORLD* magazine makes an important point in a powerful way in "Putting Asunder," published in the June 10, 2006 edition. Protecting marriage means confronting the evil of divorce. Consider this:

But as the gay-marriage crisis looms large, another massive marriage crisis churns beneath the surface and behind church doors. Tens of thousands of men and women will marry in the United States in June, the most popular month for weddings. The same month, tens of thousands of couples will also divorce. That trend will repeat itself for the rest of the year.

During a 10-month period in 2005, an estimated 1.8 million couples got married in the United States, according to the National Center for Health Statistics. During the same period, nearly 800,000 couples divorced. A total of more than 56.4 million married couples live together in the United States, according to the 2000 Census (compared with 595,000 homosexual couples). As many as 24 million of those married couples could end up divorced if the nation's divorce rate continues to hover between 35 percent and 45 percent.

*That evangelical phenomenon is "an incredible indictment" and "completely inexcusable," according to Andreas Kostenberger, professor at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and author of *God, Marriage, and Family*. Mr. Kostenberger told *WORLD* that while it's important for Christians to oppose gay marriage "we also shouldn't lose track of the fact that so many of our Christian marriages are ending in divorce. . . . It certainly renders us vulnerable in the battle for the definition of marriage."*

Mr. Kostenberger says the problems of gay marriage and divorce both grow from the same dark root: sin and a low view of marriage. The church's divorce rate equals that of the secular world, he adds, because the church has adopted a secular mindset full of "superficial remedies that don't deal with the deeper problems."

For example, most of the marriage resources in Christian bookstores are focused on "how-to- lists and techniques.

. . . They're really indistinct from the secular world," says Mr. Kostenberger. Christians need a deeper understanding of biblical marriage and how it fits into the broader context of the Bible, he says, not just tips on better communication. "Liberalism is pervasive and it promotes the notion that we ought to make whatever choices are best for us as opposed to the biblical idea of sacrificial love."

A church that refuses to confront the sinfulness of divorce will have little credibility in addressing the sinfulness of homosexuality. - *AlbertMohler.com*, 6/9/06

RADICAL ISLAM AND U.S. PRISONS

I don't usually make predictions, but here's one I'll venture. If, God forbid, an attack by home-grown Islamist radicals occurs on American soil, many, if not most, of the perpetrators will have converted to Islam while in prison.

I am hardly going out on a limb here. I said this first in 2001. The spread of an especially virulent form of Islam within American prisons is obvious to those of us who have spent time in these prisons.

It's the rest of American society that is in denial. Now, thanks to a new study, ignorance is no longer an option.

The study, titled "Out of the Shadows," concluded that "the U.S. . . is at risk of facing the sort of homegrown terrorism currently plaguing other countries." The source of that risk, according to researchers from George Washington University and the University of Virginia, is "[America's] large prison population."

"Radicalized prisoners" within this population "are a potential pool of recruits by terrorist groups," the study says. The sources of radicalization are incarcerated Islamic extremists and outside organizations that support them. The report notes that the absence of "monitoring by authoritative Islamic chaplains" permits "materials that advocate violence [to infiltrate] the prison system undetected."

Some of this material is provided by known al-Qaeda affiliates. It "[urges Muslim prisoners] to wage war against non-Muslims who have not submitted to Islamic rule." As a former employee of a radical Islamist group who is now a Christian told a Senate committee, "I know of only a few instances in which prisons rejected the literature we attempted to distribute -- and it was never because of the literature's radicalism."

Senator Susan Collins (R-Maine) was correct when she called the situation "an emerging threat to our national security." The obvious question: What do we do about it?

The study recommends the creation of a federal commission to "investigate this issue in depth." It says that an "objective risk assessment" is "urgently needed" so that "officials [can] address this issue now, rather than [managing] a crisis later." . . .

The largely unimpeded spread of radical Islam through our prisons coincides with increased opposition to the one really successful antidote -- that is, the presence of Christianity.

An obvious example is the lawsuit against our prison program in Iowa. Programs like ours are working. We have studies to prove it. And they are the best solution to the alienation and rage that fuels conversions to radical Islam, as well as gangs and other hate groups inside the prisons. Making it harder for organizations like Prison Fellowship to operate within prison walls leaves jihadists and other radical groups as the only game in town.

Unfortunately, opponents like Barry Lynn of the Americans United are blind to this, which puts more than the program at risk -- because, as we saw in the case of the shoe bomber, Richard Reid, groups that are now operating in the shadows of our prisons are a real danger to us. - Chuck Colson, *townhall.com*, 9/26/06

VENEZUELA'S CITGO GAS

Venezuela-backed Citgo Petroleum faced anger among its U.S. outlets after Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez blasted President Bush as "the devil" at UN proceedings last month. Convenience-store giant 7-Eleven announced Sept. 27 that its more than 2,000 stores will no longer pump Citgo fuel. In Boston, local politicians called for the removal of a large, lighted Citgo sign visible from Fenway Park and long a local landmark. (My feeling is: **Don't buy Citgo gas.** - N.P.) - *WORLD*, 10/7/06

Thanks to those who have so far helped in getting a new CVN computer. It has been ordered. - N.P.



Christian
View of the News

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