

On Christianity and Immigration Reform

I know that some of you readers who don't actually know me consider me to be a Godless Liberal. And I'm OK with that. By their fruit you will know them, and I've seen the fruit of the Godfearing Conservatives. It frankly disgusts me.

It should come as no surprise to anyone that I consider President Bush a buffoon, and his administration a policy catastrophe. But there is one thing that Bush has done that I admire, one thing that did not pander to his base, or reek of self-centered hubris. One actual act of "Compassionate Conservatism." And that was his Immigration Reform proposal, that the "Conservatives" of his own party shot down.

Now, I've never liked the terms "Liberal" or "Conservative," mostly because they seldom describe the people or policies they're applied to with any accuracy whatsoever. If the words had any actual meaning, then a conservative would presumably be someone in favor of conserving something of value, like traditional ideals, or long standing policies, or organized religion – which is presumably why we have "religious conservatives." Conversely, a liberal should favor freedom, including freedom from the restrictions of the past. I guess that's why liberals might be godless.

Anyway, these so called morally upright, family valued "Conservatives" shot down Bush's Immigration reform proposal. Why, I ask. Was it to uphold our nation's traditional ideals, like those emblazoned on the Statue of Liberty? You know, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled Mexicans yearning to breathe free; the wretched refuse from Central America's shores..." No, that's apparently not what they want to conserve. (Memo to Cheney: sandblast the statue.)

What about the traditional religious values of Christianity, the values they claim to guard? As they love to tell us, they have after all adopted Jesus Christ as their Personal Savior, as if he's a possession or something, the way I've adopted the I-pod as my personal music device. So how do these religious conservatives treat their Personal Savior? When he is hungry, do they feed him? When he's thirsty, do they give him a drink? And when he's 3000 miles from home, seeking a better life for himself and his family, do they give him shelter?

No they don't. In my estimation, not exactly seated-at-the right-hand caliber behavior, if you catch my drift.

So why not? Because that would be amnesty! (A collective shudder would be appropriate here.) These foreigners have dared to defy our wonderful tradition, the one where we pass restrictive entrance laws to keep the riffraff out, and that just won't do. To let them stay without punishment would erode our moral authority. They must be punished first.

(Incidentally, "Conservatives" are big on punishment. Except for their own, the Richard Nixons and Scooter Libbys, who have already suffered enough. But that's different.)

Those Spicks and Wetbacks have trespassed on our territory. That is unpardonable: it would clearly be against our traditional moral and religious values to forgive trespassers. No, no good Christian Conservative would ever forgive those who trespass against us. That would be just so wrong.

Well, no thank you, but Christian Conservatism is just not for me. I'd much prefer to be a Godless Liberal, free to throw off those traditional strictures. In particular, free to love my neighbor, even if he happens to have become my neighbor illegally.