

http://onfaith.washingtonpost.com/onfaith/panelists/willis_e_elliott/2008/02/american_law_and_sharia_are_in.html

American Law and Shariah are Incompatible

In thousands of Islamist madrasas worldwide, Muslim youth are being told that their fundamental choice is between going to hell or struggling (“jihad”) to cover the world with sharia governments.

No matter our respect for Islam as contributive to world civilization, and our recognition that the ummah (Muslim community) in the form of a political state is entitled to have its own laws (in the case of Muslim states, sharia), in Islamists’ hearts and hands sharia is not only the legal structure of Muslim states but also a programmatic sword for penetrating and conquering “dar es harb” (war territory, meaning all the world not presently under sharia).

Now to the question: “The Archbishop of Canterbury has suggested that English law must accommodate some aspects of sharia – the body of Islamic religious law. Do you agree? Should U.S. law make room for sharia?”

The Archbishop of Canterbury is an eminent Christian theologian of generous spirit. But I worry that like all good things, generosity can get out of hand. If English law opens up to admit the sword-point of a radically different legal mentality, law itself will be reduced in its dignity and law enforcement will become more difficult.

American exceptionalism includes the fact that almost all who get to live here consider themselves Americans. Not so in Britain, which consists of ethnic-religious enclaves. Few British Muslims consider themselves British, so why should they *not* want to be governed by their own rather than by English law?

No, *U.S. law should not make room for sharia*. At the end of the 19th century, our national government refused to accommodate Mormon polygamy – and the president of that church said he obtained a divine “revelation” against polygamy even though Joseph Smith, the first Mormon prophet, said he had received a “revelation” in favor of it. Washington did not let generosity get out of hand.

Because America is so open and free, some slip into the romantic notion that we are the world-in-small and can be – without destruction of the American way of life – a pluralistic world-state, with all traditions equal. But the fact is that America is culture-specific. It began with English immigrants, and Americans are English-speaking (whatever other languages they may wish to continue). English law was fundamental; and, admixed with a few other elements, it took the form of the U.S. Constitution. English religion was various versions of Christianity.

A short way to signal all this is in the phrase “the American mind.” The American mind has always been both “under God” (the God of the Bible + the Enlightenment) and early came to be “under the Constitution.” Opening to any alien system of religious-legal thinking – even to the smallest degree – would present the American mind with a rival on its own turf, and initiate a growing controversy and chaos, the playing out of “the crisis of civilization” (the West and Islam in conflict) right here at home.

The root of the threat of such a calamity is in that word “equal,” a holy word in our civil religion. If equality is the summum bonum, the highest political value, efforts to deny it to anyone or to any point of view strikes many as blasphemous. Setting aside the question whether the world’s religions and legal structures are equal in value, the American mind (and way of life) is *a particular mind* which would destroy itself if it welcomed rivals on equal terms.

Lincoln saw to it that America did not break up into *states*. We now need to see to it that the American culture and civilization (the American mind) does not break down into *rivaling minds* contending for victory over our unique marriage of plurality and unity (“e pluribus unum”).

BY WILLIS E. ELLIOTT | FEBRUARY 17, 2008; 8:08 PM

Comments

Please report offensive comments below.

Willis E. Elliott,

It is not so peaceful when you consider the flaws in Christianity and for that matter the flaws in all religions.

To wit:

A synopsis of the flaws in the founders and foundations of the major religions for those that have not seen them before or did not take the time to look:

1. Abraham founder/father of three major religions was either the embellishment of the lives of three different men or a mythical character as was Moses, the "Tablet-Man" who talked to burning bushes and made much magic in Egypt.

1.5 million Conservative Jews and their rabbis have relegated Abraham to the myth pile along with most if not all the OT. <http://www.simpletoremember.com/vitals/ConservativeTorah.htm>

2. Jesus, the illiterate Jewish peasant/carpenter possibly suffering from hallucinations, has been characterized anywhere from the Messiah from Nazareth to a mythical character from mythical Nazareth to a mamzer from Nazareth (Professor Bruce Chilton, in his book Rabbi Jesus). Analyses of Jesus' life by many contemporary NT scholars (e.g. Professors Crossan, Borg and Fredriksen, On Faith panelists) via the NT and related documents have concluded that only about 30% of Jesus' sayings and ways noted in the NT were authentic. The rest being embellishments (e.g. miracles)/hallucinations made/had by the NT authors to impress various Christian, Jewish and Pagan sects.

The 30% of the NT that is "authentic Jesus" like everything in life was borrowed/plagiarized and/or improved from those who came before. In Jesus' case, it was the ways and sayings of the Babylonians, Greeks, Persians, Egyptians, Hittites, Canaanites, OT, John the Baptizer and possibly the ways and sayings of traveling Greek Cynics. <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/theories.html>

For added "pizzazz", Catholic/Christian theologians divided god the singularity into three persons and invented atonement as an added guilt trip for the "pew people" to go along with this trinity of overseers. By doing so, they made god the padre into god the "filicider".

3. Mohammed, an illiterate, womanizing, lust and greed-driven, warmongering, hallucinating Arab, also had embellishing/hallucinating/plagiarizing scribal biographers who not only added "angels" and flying chariots to the koran but also a militaristic agenda to support the plundering and looting of the lands of non-believers.

This agenda continues as shown by the assassination of Bhutto, the conduct of the seven Muslim doctors in the UK, the 9/11 terrorists, the 24/7 Sunni suicide/roadside/market/mosque bombers, the 24/7 Shiite suicide/roadside/market/mosque bombers, the Islamic bombers of the trains in the UK and Spain, the Bali crazies, the Kenya crazies, the Pakistani "koranics", the Palestine suicide bombers/rocketeers, the Lebanese nutcases, the Taliban nut jobs, and the Filipino "koranics".

And who funds these acts of terror? The warmongering, Islamic, Shiite terror and torture theocracy of Iran aka the Third Axis of Evil and also the Sunni "Wannabees" of Saudi Arabia.

4. Luther, Calvin, Joe Smith, Henry VIII, Wesley et al, founders of Christian-based religions, also suffered from the belief in/hallucinations of "pretty wingy talking flying fictional thingie" visits and "prophecies" for profits analogous to the myths of Catholicism (resurrections, apparitions, ascensions and immaculate conceptions).

5. Hinduism (from an online Hindu site) - "Hinduism cannot be described as an organized religion. It is not founded by any individual. Hinduism is God centered and therefore one can call Hinduism as founded by God, because the answer to the question 'Who is behind the eternal principles and who makes them work?' will have to be 'Cosmic power, Divine power, God'."

The caste/laborer system and cow worship are problems when saying a fair and rational God founded Hinduism."

6. Buddhism- "Buddhism began in India about 500 years before the birth of Christ. The people living at that time had become disillusioned with certain beliefs of Hinduism including the caste system, which had grown extremely complex. The number of outcasts (those who did not belong to any particular caste) was continuing to grow."

"However, in Buddhism, like so many other religions, fanciful stories arose concerning events in the life of the founder, Siddhartha Gautama (fifth century B.C.):"

Archaeological discoveries have proved, beyond a doubt, his historical character, but apart from the legends we know very little about the circumstances of his life. e.g. Buddha by one legend was supposedly talking when he came out of his mother's womb.

Bottom line: There are many good ways of living but be aware of the hallucinations, embellishments, lies and myths surrounding the founders and foundations of said rules of life.

POSTED BY: CONCERNED THE CHRISTIAN NOW LIBERATED | FEBRUARY 19, 2008 8:42 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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POSTED BY: CONCERNED THE CHRISTIAN NOW LIBERATED | FEBRUARY 19, 2008 8:40 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Sheesh. Just as we get all done hating Black folk, we gotta get used to gays. Now that we have Gay Pride, along come the Muslims. This is most disturbing. At the rate we're going, we'll soon run out of people to hate.

No, wait! Thanks to King George, we're making enemies faster than we can kill them. What a relief!

POSTED BY: JOHNNY B. GOODE | FEBRUARY 18, 2008 10:43 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

farfalotis, you didn't warn us the gas you're blasting comes out of your mouth.. :)

here's one of my favorite poems-

"The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil
Crushed. Why do men then now not reckon his rod?
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;
And all is seared with trade; Bleared, smeared with toil;
And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And though the last lights off the black West went
Oh morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs -
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with the warm breast and with ah! bright wings.
All things counter, original, spare, strange,
Whatever is fickle, freckled, who knows how
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
He fathers forth whose beauty is past change.
Praise him.

this is (of course) the great Gerard Manley Hopkins. and it has absolutely nothing to do with Islam or Sharia law in Britain. although he was born an Anglican and became a Roman Catholic.

he does remind us of the supremacy of God the Creator. if we watch nature, we see decay, loss and deterioration-regenerating and bringing a rebirth of new and beautiful life.

he also reminds me how much I love the Western mind- brave, honest, seeking...

POSTED BY: PEGGY SUE | FEBRUARY 18, 2008 10:42 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Jesus hates me, this I know,
He threatens me to Hell I'll go.
He tells me that I'm filled with sin,
And all that's good belongs to him.

POSTED BY: FARFALOTIS | FEBRUARY 18, 2008 1:28 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Religions are systems of laws NOT systems of beliefs. Democracies are systems of laws NOT systems of beliefs. There is no way to reconcile the two, religion and democracy. They are inherently incompatible. One must go. Which one?

There ain't no money in preaching and teaching democracy so democracy loses. Democracy is not community but rather a collection of individuals so democracy loses.

Your choice is simple, democracy or religion and not both democracy and religion. You can run your government and be free or you can let the minister run your life and be his slave.

That was Devil in the burning bush NOT God for heaven is democracy is heaven...freedom is heaven is freedom.

Get educated, <http://www.hoax-buster.org/sellyoursoul> while there is still a flicker left in the flame of democracy.

POSTED BY: GET YOUR HEADS OUT PEOPLE | FEBRUARY 18, 2008 12:44 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Writing as a woman, I can tell you that myopic men like the Archbishop of Canterbury terrify me. Is this supposedly educated man not aware of the injustices towards women contained within Shariah law? Is he not aware that Qur'an 4:34 gives a man permission to beat his wife should she disobey him; that Muslims can collect up to 4 wives, as if they were cattle or cars; that daughters cannot inherit as much of their parents' estate as boys; that it takes the word of TWO women to equal the word of ONE man? And the Archbishop dares to say that the UK should adopt these hideous practices? Would Christ agree with his conclusions? I don't think so!

The Archbishop has proved himself to be no Christian, and should resign. Women in particular would breathe a huge sigh of relief if he were gone.

POSTED BY: JANCIS M. ANDREWS | FEBRUARY 18, 2008 9:42 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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POSTED BY: JANCIS M. ANDREWS | FEBRUARY 18, 2008 9:42 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

PAX VOBISCUM

You could not have known how appropriate your words.
Let me take it LINE BY LINE:

1....."Jesus love me, this I know,"

I have known this since my turbulent teens, when he entered my inner life, where ever since I have had his peace and joy.

2....."Though my hair is white as snow."

And has long been: I am 90.

3....."Though my sight is growing dim,"

I am 80% blind, the 20% being hazy & spotty.

4....."Still He bids me trust in Him"

By God's grace, my trust in him is deepening, outpacing the deepening of my loss & sorrow. God is as good when life tumbles in as when it opens out. Seven times in the Bible's first chapter, God's goodness in the creation is affirmed--the last time, "very good" (Hebrew,"tov meod").

For me as a Christian, this goodness appears supremely in God's coming to the world in and as Jesus (the Son in the Holy Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). Through his Life, Ministry, Crucifixion, and Resurrection, the gates of new life are open to all who believe.

Myteries remain, especially the mystery of good and evil. But "How can you believe in God, seeing all the evil in the world?" is a wash when coupled with "How can you NOT believe in God, seeing all the GOOD in the world?" I believe that when I die, I will walk into the everlasting arms of God (as, when an infant, I struggled up on two feet to walk into the waiting arms of my parents).

Thank you for giving me this occasion to witness.

POSTED BY: WILLIS E. ELLIOTT | FEBRUARY 17, 2008 3:28 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Jesus loves me, this I know,
Though my hair is white as snow.
Though my sight is growing dim,
Still He bids me trust in Him.

Pax Domini sit semper vobiscum..

EILIDH...

You ask "Just which ethnic-religious enclaves were you referring to?" ANSWER: Where I lived, briefly, in Sheffield. On our street, two Christian homes (with front gardens) & 30 Muslim homes (with mud fronts). I pray that the amicable situation you describe will become moreso, & that British Muslim resistance to Islamism will increase.

My contrast (in the brief compass of an "On Faith" entry) was too stark. You are right to nuance better than I could have. Thank you for taking the time for detailed support of your position.

POSTED BY: WILLIS E. ELLIOTT | FEBRUARY 16, 2008 9:59 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Dr Elliott,

>> American exceptionalism includes the fact that almost all who get to live here consider themselves Americans. Not so in Britain, which consists of ethnic-religious enclaves. Few British Muslims consider themselves British, so why should they not want to be governed by their own rather than by English law? <<

What you write simply isn't true.

Most British Muslims think of themselves as British. Some Muslims live in communities with large Muslim populations. Others choose to live in mixed communities or in small villages. Most Muslim kids go to the local schools.

Some British Muslims wear traditional dress. Some women wear stylish western dress with a head scarf, while others wear nothing that would distinguish them from the non-Muslim population.

British Muslims are active in most areas of society. They are mayors and MPs, doctors, barristers, business owners, teachers, scientists, pharmacists, and athletes. They are Conservative, Labour, and Lib Dem. They are active on the local councils. Their kids play with our kids. They are our friends and neighbours.

From the reactions we saw in the media to the Archbishop of Canterbury's comments, most Brits, and that includes Muslim Brits, don't want to see the law changed to accommodate any religious-based influences. A number of British Muslims, both male and female, were outspoken in their opposition to any change in the law to accommodate Sharia. They were quite articulate in explaining why they didn't want to see the laws changed.

The UK is nothing like you describe. Christians (of many denominations), Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, Baha'i, Zoroastrians, Jains, Rastafarians, Scientologists, and Pagans live together, generally in harmony. In my personal experience, the ugliest expressions of public bigotry have been between Catholics and Protestants in my home city of Glasgow. Yet the anti-Semitism, traditional in Christian societies, has been so rare that one could live a lifetime in Scotland and never encounter it. There is no tradition of anti-Semitism in Scotland, you see. But that's the west of Scotland for you. However, a Highlander will be called a 'teuchter', which isn't very nice. That's a bit of Glaswegian cultural bigotry; nothing to do with religion.

The UK is a complex nation, consisting of the historically ethnic countries of Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and England. (And even within those countries there are cultural differences.) Our history, with its intertwined cultures, makes the British national identity a complex one. By necessity, we are a nation that values freedom, but we do so from under the mantle of our nationhood.

Immigration is not new to Britain. Scandinavians, Jews, Poles, Italians, Germans, French and other have been coming to these islands for centuries. The Muslims are just one more group to add to the mix, and even they aren't as monolithic as the media depict them. The educated cosmopolitan political refugees, Muslims in elegant western clothes, have different beliefs regarding law, behaviour, and other religious and lifestyle issues than the Muslim economic refugees from parts of Africa and Pakistan.

Muslims tend to integrate into the communities where they live. Glasgow Muslims speak with a strong Glaswegian accent, peppered with local Scots vocabulary. But then, so do the Chinese people who live there. Scots move south. The English move north. The Irish and Welsh move everywhere. Our Prime Minister, a fellow Glaswegian, a chap named Gordon Brown, is a Scot. We have had several Scottish Prime Ministers, a Welsh Prime Minister, one Prime Minister who was an English Jew, and one who was an Englishwoman.

Just which 'ethnic-religious enclaves' were you referring to?

You ought to check your facts before you present erroneous impressions as the truth. You are an academic. I would have expected better from you and from the Washington Post.

POSTED BY: EILIDH IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE | FEBRUARY 15, 2008 7:44 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Anonymous. I stand corrected, and a little taller, I might add. As an Enlightenment thinker I am perhaps not as familiar with modernity as I should be. It seems that 5'11" is more than sufficient for epic poetry.

POSTED BY: ENLIGHTENMENT THINKER | FEBRUARY 15, 2008 1:25 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

NlightNed Thinker. You are confused- little man.

" I sat upon the shore
Fishing, with the arid plain behind me
Shall I at least set my lands in order?"

London Bridge is falling down falling down falling down

Poi s'ascose nel foco che gli affina
Quando fiam ceu chelidon - O swallow swallow
Le Prince d'Aquitaine a la tour abolie
These fragments I have shored against my ruins
Why then Ile fit you. Hieronymo's mad againe.
Datta. Dayadhvam. Damyata.

Shantih shantih shantih"

You think-
-TS Eliot was not impressively tall-

No No No. TS Eliot is a very tall man. VERY TALL.

POSTED BY: ANONYMOUS | FEBRUARY 14, 2008 10:58 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mSCPbknyUWU>

POSTED BY: BRIAN | FEBRUARY 14, 2008 6:34 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

T.S. Eliot was 5'11" which made him relatively tall for his era, although not impressively tall. Nevertheless, I think that 5'11" is tall enough to be a great poet since poetry is very personal and is usually conducted sitting down, preferably under a tree. But Mr. Eliot certainly didn't have the kind of height required for epic poetry, say, of the Homeric tradition. Not much is known about Homer, or even if he actually existed as a single human being. If he did, I'm sure he was very tall indeed!

POSTED BY: ENLIGHTENMENT THINKER | FEBRUARY 14, 2008 4:29 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

"If you aren't in over your head, how do you know how tall you are?"

T. S. Eliot

POSTED BY: ANONYMOUS | FEBRUARY 14, 2008 2:42 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Dr. Elliott,

How tall are you?

POSTED BY: ENLIGHTENMENT THINKER | FEBRUARY 14, 2008 2:34 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Corsair wants to know why "do you believe that way"..

I believe Islamic Law is closed and oppressive. I believe there is very little stopping the Islamic advance towards Global Dominance. Islamists have been establishing mosques, making deep legal inroads, and increasing population in Western nations for over a generation. Shari'ah may be closer than you think. "People of the Book" may live under Islamic law. Gays, Pagans, and Atheists may not.

One good exposure to Shari'ah law will send most American gays back into the closet for an e-x-t-e-n-d-e-d stay..

POSTED BY: ANONYMOUS | FEBRUARY 14, 2008 1:12 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

As I stated before, and Anonymous backed me up, America is for tall people. Our founders were led by tall men and our nation was held together by Lincoln, a very tall man, and therefore a very great man. I should also add that westward expansion was led by Andrew Jackson who was a tall, great man. In our day, we admire Ronald Reagan and Lyndon Johnson, both of whom were tall men, and were therefore great, but for different reasons.

We need to think carefully about Sharia in America. We can't just discount it, because there are some tall men who support it. Foremost among them is Osama Bin Laden who is very tall.

POSTED BY: ENLIGHTENMENT THINKER | FEBRUARY 14, 2008 11:54 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

well, looking down on people has never done anyone any good. And it does look like the world ends with a whimper, rather than a bang :).

POSTED BY: BRIAN | FEBRUARY 14, 2008 11:05 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

'Anonymous', if that really is your name...:

"The BNP believes in Christian values therefore we don't believe in gay adoption or gay marriage"

Are you part of the BNP because you believe that way or do you believe that way because the party does?

POSTED BY: CORSAIR | FEBRUARY 14, 2008 9:56 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

"in Islamists' hearts and hands sharia is not only the legal structure of Muslim states but also a programmatic sword for penetrating and conquering "dar es harb" (war territory, meaning all the world not presently under sharia)."

Following in the the footsteps of the greatest example sent to mankind-

In the Path of Allah

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jzxb7QczZC4>

Videos of smiling suicide bombers and insurgent attacks have become as important a weapon as explosives in Al Qaeda's global jihad against the West. The jihadis have seized on the power of the internet and their message cannot be silenced.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p-gmGdbspmg>

POSTED BY: ANONYMOUS | FEBRUARY 14, 2008 6:52 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

In thousands of Christian churches worldwide, christian youth are being told that their fundamental choice is between going to hell or struggling to cover the world with Christian governments.

blah,blah,blah...pot,kettle,black...hypocrisy....out brand is better than the competing brand of thocracy....blah,blah,blah,...bow your heads while we pass the plate...blather,blather...

POSTED BY: WE HAVE MET OUR ENEMY AND HE IS US | FEBRUARY 14, 2008 3:59 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Anonymous

I don't believe that members of the BNP should be able to adopt either.

I can demonstrate that children have much worse outcomes when members of the BNP adopt them than when Gay Parents adopt them.

How are we going to decide our dispute? Ask Jesus? Or the Alito themed supreme court?

POSTED BY: HENRY JAMES | FEBRUARY 13, 2008 10:45 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

The BNP believes in Christian values therefore we don't believe in gay adoption or gay marriage. But we don't want to persecute gays either. What people do behind closed doors is their business.

Under an Islamic government homosexuals will have a great deal more to worry about than not being able to adopt kids or marry. Under Islamic law Homosexuality is forbidden and it states gays should be executed. Many people in Islamic states have been executed for homosexuality and this is what gays can look forward to in Britain as long as the Liberals take sides with Muslims:

Gays - look forward to Islamic law

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TztGX8U5Unw>

POSTED BY: ANONYMOUS | FEBRUARY 13, 2008 10:03 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Brilliant idea from me.

Why don't those who want to practice
Gay Marriage
polygamy
Marriage with Penguins (which I practice up here)

Just write a contract that specifies the legal obligations, etc.

Government should GET OUT of the business of defining such relationships. They give preference to Man/women marriage by giving it automatic legal benefits.

Let's generalize the benefits (that is what Civil Unions often do). And let anyone who wants to call their union a Marriage do so. "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet."

Anonymous: as far as the Majority getting to oppress various minorities, that is EXACTLY what the constitution (which does NOT mention God) was designed to PREVENT> You Un-american you!!!

POSTED BY: HENRY JAMES | FEBRUARY 13, 2008 9:51 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

I'm sorry for you Possum.

I'm sorry that you're bored by:

"the two hundred plus year old words of TJ'? (yawning)"

I like them. Those dusty old two hundred plus year old TJ words still appeal to me:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

I'm also sorry you mistook me for an evangelical Christian. I'm not. I know that'll be a BIG disappointment for you.

'If they (Christians voters) actually existed then Mr. Huckabee would not be in the desperate 'also ran' bind he's in....."

Since when is Mr. Huckabee the only Christian Presidential choice? Again Possum-

TIME FOR A REALITY CHECK.

POSTED BY: WILLIAM | FEBRUARY 13, 2008 9:47 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

William... That's it? Repeating a copy/paste of Mr. Jefferson's? That's all you have to offer? No insights of your own, no words of your own, only the two hundred plus year old words of TJ'? (yawning)

I told you I disagree with his words already, I ask you several questions and you offer nothing at all in return.. but other people's words.... What do YOU think William? After all I could google up a few zillion contrary opinions by other pretty smart people... that's no debate that's just throwing bumper stickers at each other...

So what if some of the crafters of the constitution were 'christian', most of the guys that built all the houses of ill repute were 'christian'..... Please, stay on some topic and debate the points with what you think.... Support them with reasoning, not clichés or church sign cutsyisms...

Is it true that the majority rules this debate? Let's go back to that..... 75% of Americans are Christian? I say... not really..... Not the evangelical kind you might imagine them, hope for them to be..... After all if 75% of the U.S. population actually wanted the constitution amended to fit within the word of God, they would have shown themselves by now.... As a matter of fact they still can.... Where are they William? Where is the army of two hundred –plus million people that want to truly make this a Christian nation? If they actually existed then Mr. Huckabee would not be in the desperate 'also ran' bind he's in..... He would not be the brunt of every joke on the

news shows and comedy spoofs (sure those are 'liberal' shows, but in order for you to account for 75% of the population on your side of this, you're gonna need a lot of liberal Christians as well)... He would not be number three or five on the likely losing side of the current presidential debate.

The simple fact sir is that you don't have a standing army of 75% of the population that want to sublet this nation's laws to the evangelical avenging god..... Most of your number of Christian soldiers, in fact are merely tepid, holiday Christians... not at all willing to buy in to the whole 'young earth' theory, not willing to confess and witness the 'god will send violent storms to our cities if we allow gays to marry' message..... There is much, much more dissention and debate, and broad disagreement amongst Christians in this nation about the role of God+Gvmnt then you may care to admit.

If majority rules, sir.. then you do not win either. Evangelical Christians are as well, merely a shrill, self-important, minority. You are a minority even among Christians. And you too are welcome to stay and enjoy the ride.

POSTED BY: POSSUM | FEBRUARY 13, 2008 9:03 PM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Gosh Enlightenment Thinker: They are TALL men!!

"It is impossible to rightly govern a nation without God and the Bible."

George Washington

"The God who gave us life, gave us liberty at the same time: the hand of force may destroy, but cannot disjoin them.'

Thomas Jefferson

"We have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious Hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us."

Abraham Lincoln

POSTED BY: ANONYMOUS | FEBRUARY 13, 2008 7:06 PM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

"God's laws are for the god-lovers as you say"

Possam -I didn't say that. You did.

I said - "The minds and thoughts that carefully considered the rights you cherish were God given to God lovers."

So let's yield to a mind greater than yours or mine:

"God who gave us life gave us liberty. And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure if we have removed their only firm basis: a conviction in the minds of men that these liberties are the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with His wrath? Indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that His justice cannot sleep forever."

Thomas Jefferson

POSTED BY: WILLIAM | FEBRUARY 13, 2008 6:48 PM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

America is for tall people. Washington was tall. Jefferson was tall. That's why we consider them the greatest Americans. The other American, who we know was a very great American, was Lincoln. Lincoln was very tall.

POSTED BY: ENLIGHTENMENT THINKER | FEBRUARY 13, 2008 6:39 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

William;

"Possum you forget the US Constitution that you so lovingly cling "

First.... You keep insisting that I am ignorant,' 'keep forgetting' that tends to be a bit off-putting and actually adds nothing to the discussion.

That I disagree with you is not based on ignorance or forgetfulness at all, those are just the empty, perhaps hopeful claims of the egotistical... I disagree with you because I have studied, searched, and sought and found my own answers.. They are merely different than yours.

The religious preferences of the crafters is completely irrelevant to the constitution itself. The crafters were also primarily of British ancestry, but the whole point of creating this nation was to shove away the past, backwards, totalitarian British government, including and specifically the corrupt church/state entanglement.

What they wrote, enacted, and laid down their lives to protect was to have a new, improved non-religious state. One that did not involve itself, tangle itself with church matters. To leave the two entities separate; that is why God is not given either credit or tasking within the constitution.

It is constructed by men, flawed men of various backgrounds, seeking to make things better than they had been, not stay the same, to be better than they themselves had actually known. Government of the people, by the people, for the people...

God has his own courts, his own laws, his own enforcers, his own judgment. No one is trying to take that away. God's laws are for the god-lovers as you say, and you are welcome to keep them...

POSTED BY: POSSUM | FEBRUARY 13, 2008 6:34 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Possum writes "A true secular society would have no concern with any religious defintions of marriage."

Exactly. It couldn't be more obvious, but for some reason most people just don't get it. Marriage is a religious institution and it should be dealt with in accordance with whatever religious organization one does or does not belong to. Government HAS NO BUSINESS in the marriage business.

POSTED BY: CHRIS EVERETT | FEBRUARY 13, 2008 6:28 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Tired:

You sound like you need a nap.

Nap nap nap.

Nap.

POSTED BY: ANONYMOUS | FEBRUARY 13, 2008 6:27 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Don't you ever get tired of your "American Mind" crap?

Crap crap crap.

Crap.

POSTED BY: TIRED | FEBRUARY 13, 2008 6:23 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

There now Possum, settle down.. -somehow you must have missed Berlinerblau's post-

http://newsweek.washingtonpost.com/onfaith/georgetown/2008/02/the_secular_taboo_response_to.html

"I failed to ingratiate myself to nonbelievers" was his comment, not mine. If you want to tell him "to start getting comfortable with that..." you will have to post to his thread. I've given you a link above -so you won't get lost..

"Please, Why do you hate or fear the constitution so much? Why are you afraid of the freedoms that it proclaims?"

Possum you forget the US Constitution that you so lovingly cling to- was crafted by religious and predominantly Christian men. The minds and thoughts that carefully considered the rights you cherish were God given to God lovers. As a Christian -I love and understand our Constitution perhaps better than you.

You are a minority in America, but you live in peace. You are welcome to live among us.

Unfortunately, religious persecution still exists in other parts of the world:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5oj9PBwz-X8>

POSTED BY: WILLIAM | FEBRUARY 13, 2008 6:06 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

"themselves that they were a mass social movement with tens of millions adherents"

No, you are completely wrong. We know we are a small minority, you are being completely misled if you have heard or were told to think otherwise.

"You are egocentric and unaware of the thoughts and wishes of the majority of your American neighbors"

I am not at all unaware of these things, I just don't subscribe to the notion that American government is an appropriate weapon of enforcement for religious institutions, Christian, Muslim, or whatever.

If a majority, say seventy five percent of the American population 'wished' for all early term abortions to be legal, would you simply stand aside and shrug your shoulders?

Please, Why do you hate or fear the constitution so much? Why are you afraid of the freedoms that it proclaims?

Also why do you need the government to do your church's bidding? Why do you need to have 'man-laws' passed to punish people for acting un-christian-like? Could it be that your religion lacks the authority, strength, and the power? Could it be that your religion, without government assistance could not even control it's own members? Could it be that your church, without government assistance would have no influence whatsoever on the actions of the majority of the people in the U.S.?

"that few would listen to a minority group lacking political organization and clout"

Like African Americans and women? They were, and still are minorities... should we have ignored them? Should they have simply learned their place as well?

"I failed to ingratiate myself to nonbelievers"
You might want to start getting comfortable with that...

POSTED BY: POSSUM | FEBRUARY 13, 2008 5:33 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Possum-

I will point you to WEE: but I believe you have already read and discounted:

"But the fact is that America is CULTURE-SPECIFIC. It began with English immigrants, and Americans are English-speaking.. English law was fundamental; and, admixed with a few other elements, it took the form of the U.S. Constitution. English religion was various versions of CHRISTIANITY.

The American mind has always been both "under GOD" (the GOD of the BIBLE + the ENLIGHTENMENT) and early came to be "under the Constitution." Opening to any alien system of religious-legal thinking – even to the smallest degree – would present the American mind with a rival on its own turf, and initiate a growing controversy and chaos, the playing out of "the crisis of civilization" (THE WEST AND ISLAM IN CONFLICT) right here at home."

Possum types-

"To vehemently disallow Islamic influence but allow, even celebrate Christian influence is anti-American."

You do not appreciate American History. You are egocentric and unaware of the thoughts and wishes of the majority of your American neighbors.

Even Berlinerblau gets it:

"My claim was that since the 1970s secularism as a political project in the United States had stagnated woefully. It had been out-hustled, out-organized, and even outsmarted by a renascent movement of Evangelical Christians. The latter methodically (and legally, might I add) set about using the nation's political and judicial structures in an effort to de-secularize the public square..

The smaller (and ear-splittingly brash) part consisted of nonbelievers who were beholden to a debilitating misconception. Heading into this election year, many atheists and agnostics convinced themselves that they were a mass social movement with tens of millions adherents who were primed to make themselves heard. I countered--and here again I failed to ingratiate myself to nonbelievers--that few would listen to a minority group lacking political organization and clout."

TIME FOR A REALITY CHECK.

POSTED BY: WILLIAM | FEBRUARY 13, 2008 4:55 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

William;
"you live in a Christian majority nation"

Duh.. you think? So I should just cower in my corner and shut up?

What's your point? Seriously..... The constitution, our government is established to protect the rights of all, to treat all individuals as equals. And it is established to not favor one belief system over another. To vehemently disallow Islamic influence but allow, even celebrate Christian influence is anti-American. The government has no need, no right, to enforce, with the threat of imprisonment as it's weapon of intimidation, strictly religious codes of conduct.

Marriage is a religious 'sacred' institution. It's construct is defined in American law in strictly Christian terms. The term and concept of marriage as defined by ALL religions should be completely ignored by the government.. it simply serves no actual purpose for the protection of an individual's rights. Same with same sex marriage. It is only a sin in religious terms. Banning it protects no one's rights, it harms no one. That religious institutions want their voluntary membership to abide by strict sex-laws is their own business....

Please, make a complete point.....

POSTED BY: POSSUM | FEBRUARY 13, 2008 4:29 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

"That pronunciation key was a godsend!"

Glad it helped. I saw you chose the name Possum (not Pogo) and figured you might need to buy a vowel..

Besides everyone needs a chance to use the word "godsend" every so often:

GODSEND

Pronunciation: \ 'gäd-, send also 'göd-\

Function: noun

Etymology: back-formation from god-sent

Date: 1820

: a desirable or needed thing or event that comes unexpectedly

[Alteration of Middle English goddes sand, God's message : goddes, genitive of God, God; see god + sand, message]

Maybe someday you will wake up to the fact that you live in a Christian majority nation.

Too bad wishes aren't porsches..

POSTED BY: WILLIAM | FEBRUARY 13, 2008 4:03 PM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

William;

Thanks for the Dictionary entry.. That pronunciation key was a godsend! I'd been mispronouncing it 'Sek-le-ar' for decades... So it's really pronounced sorta the same way as 'nu-cu-ler'?

Seriously....

Marriage is a specific religious institution; the American legal interpretation is prejudicially based entirely on the Christian tradition. Several religions recognize plural marriages; therefore the American legal definition is based on a specific religious code. "b: not overtly or specifically religious" is the definition I think applies here... to ban Mormon polygamy was a state acting as a tool of religion, overtly preferring one over the other.

And, I disagree with Mr. Jefferson. I do not subscribe to the mythology that a god gave us either life, liberty, or the pursuit of happiness.

POSTED BY: POSSUM | FEBRUARY 13, 2008 2:57 PM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

"A true secular society would have no concern with any religious defintions of marriage."

Possum-

I am reposting from a thread I read last night to inform you:

"America was founded by deeply religious men. Many were fleeing religious persecution. They established separation of church and state to ensure FREEDOM to worship as they believed. Perhaps we need to review the meaning of the word secular:

SECULAR:

Pronunciation: \ 'se-kyə-lər\

Function: adjective

Etymology: Middle English, from Anglo-French seculer, from Late Latin saecularis, from saeculum the present world, from Latin, generation, age, century, world; akin to Welsh hoedl lifetime

Date: 14th century

1 a: of or relating to the worldly or temporal b: not overtly or specifically religious c: not ecclesiastical or clerical

2: not bound by monastic vows or rules; specifically : of, relating to, or forming clergy not belonging to a religious order or congregation

3 a: occurring once in an age or a century b: existing or continuing through ages or centuries c: of or relating to a long term of indefinite duration

You seem to think SECULAR is synonymous with IRRELIGIOUS.

It's not."

"God who gave us life gave us liberty. And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure if we have removed their only firm basis: a conviction in the minds of men that these liberties are the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with His wrath? Indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that His justice cannot sleep forever."

Thomas Jefferson

POSTED BY: WILLIAM | FEBRUARY 13, 2008 2:13 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Rev:

I wrote this in reply to another panelist. You can guess what she said. I think it will be helpful for you and all who claim to worship God -not a bad idea. But the road to hell is paved with good intentions.

~~~~~  
I agree with what you say, keep government out of religion. Now we need to work on the reverse, keep religion out of government. That can only be done if religious leaders are kept away from, not just out of government.

In democracy the people must decide. They cannot make an informed decision when all the facts are not presented. The way things now stand, we have let religion get into the government which is like a beach head in an amphibious invasion.

The people let them in and only the people can throw them back into the sea. The weapon of mass destruction is in order.

Truth is mass destroyer of the lie. <http://www.hoax-buster.org/sellyoursoul> combined with the enforcement of existing law, "truth in advertising" and "anti terrorist" laws already on the books should do the trick. Tell the whole 'sacred scriptures' story or none at all. And stop threatening the children with hell before their little minds mature. The partial story is the lie while hell is terror max.

Small wonder Lucifer's representatives want control of earth. After all, Lucifer tried to take over heaven, throw God out and seat Himself on God's throne. His representatives, all ministers of all faiths can hardly be expected to allow the free worship of God now can they? "Write our faith into the law of they land" they cry. Time to inform the public their ministers are selling them faith in Devil.

Hell is pure chaos. Hell's Lord, Lucifer creates chaos here on earth through His representatives. Religion in government is chaos on the silver platter.

Your view is from a distance. Perhaps you will find a closer look enlightening. What do sacred scriptures really say? Is God or Devil their spiritual author?

~~~~~  
I'm sure you seek the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. And you 'must' add "so help me God." The problem is that when the word God is spoken it's Devil that rushes to the scene.

I'm sure you agree that was the case with past popes, around the time of the "Reformation" else you would be a Roman Catholic.

POSTED BY: BGONE | FEBRUARY 13, 2008 1:57 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

"our national government refused to accommodate Mormon polygamy "

And caved in, once again, to the Christian sin of monogamous marriage.... I don't see that as being any different. A true secular society would have no concern with any religious definitions of marriage.

POSTED BY: POSSUM | FEBRUARY 13, 2008 1:40 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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