

http://onfaith.washingtonpost.com/onfaith/panelists/willis_e_elliott/2008/05/jeremiah_wright_black_preachin.html

Jeremiah Wright: Black Preaching in Context

The Question: *Jeremiah Wright's sermons continue to be an issue in the presidential campaign. Why? What do you think of his preaching style? What do you wish you understood better about it?*

“‘God so loved *the world*,’ not just the black community.” In his 4.25.08 conversation on Bill Moyer’s Journal, Jeremiah Wright quoted from the Gospel of John 3:16 to correct the widespread sound-bite-media impression that Barack Obama’s pastor preaches black racism (black racial superiority) and hatred of America. (He has been no more critical of America than the Bible’s prophets were of *their* people.)

“On Faith” says that “Jeremiah Wright’s sermons continue to be an issue in the presidential campaign.” Would that they were! For 36 years they have motivated their hearers to Christian hope and to extensive ministries of help in south Chicago. At issue rather are only a few inflammatory, out-of-context sound bites. I cannot image any greater distortion of a preacher’s message and ministry.

When I was pastoring there 67 years ago, that area of south Chicago was white-ethnic, so our church-style was white-ethnic: for two millenia, Christianity has shown itself to be culturally adaptable. Now, that area of Chicago is black-ethnic, and Trinity United Church of Christ is black-ethnic, with an “Africentric” church-style.

During my decade (the 1960s) on the national staff of Jeremiah Wright’s (and Bill Moyer’s) denomination, the United Church of Christ fought for racial equality on many fronts, including the founding of interracial churches. Trinity was founded as interracial, but the white population of the area soon disappeared into Chicago’s suburbs. So when a colleague of mine, Reuben Sheares, became pastor of Trinity, the new monochrome demographic reality had to be faced. Then his successor, Jeremiah Wright, turned Reuben’s personal slogan—“Unashamedly Black and Unapologetically Christian”—into the church’s motto.

The church’s shift in appeal from interracial to black is reflected in the membership increase from 87 (when Reuben left) to the present 6,000+. *A proper pride* in one’s heritage and folk is healthy, in contrast both to tribalism (excessive pride) and shame. In promoting that proper pride, the black preacher will occasionally step over the line, “damning” the sources of the shame (especially American slavery) and sounding chauvinistic about blackness. Having worked so much with black churches, especially black clergy, I hardly notice the rhetorical excesses. But from Wright’s excesses, the media cherry-picked “inflammatory” sound bites.

1.....From editing the Harvard law review, Barack Obama went to the degenerate and dangerous streets of south Chicago to help black youth fight the internal and external enemies of their human hopes. He discovered that in south Chicago, his most natural ally for societal improvement and human caring was Trinity Church, which he naturally joined. Also naturally, as a statesman for all the people, he will never agree with everything said by any pastor: pastors speak to and for their own people. To Bill Moyers, Wright made this distinction clear. An educated public will not be gulled by the blurring of the distinction.

2.....In 1970, a liberal-Protestant University of Chicago professor showed his student, Jeremiah Wright, a church bulletin with news only of the congregation. If a church is faithful to the Bible’s commandment to love God and neighbor, its weekly bulletin should give evidence of *love in action both in and beyond the congregation*. The student took this as guidance, and two years later became the pastor of Trinity Church—“in the heart of the community, ever seeking to win the community’s heart.” Almost his first words to his congregation were, “What are we doing for this community?”

3.....In serving God and its community, each congregation should be *a unique fit*. Trinity Church is liberal Protestant, black, Pentecostal, and altar-call evangelical. Wright, who is retiring this month, should be seen by the public not as a black-racist America-hater but as a creative pastor, generous-minded thinker, scholar (with four earned degrees, including a doctorate), and eminent churchman (with nine honorary doctorates).

4.....We shall have color-blind churches if and when we have color-blind communities. We now have ethnic churches in ethnic communities and interracial churches in interracial communities. Martin Luther King was correct that we should treat one another, and shape our laws, so that what counts is “not the color of our skin but

the content of our character." But he was unfair in saying that "Sunday morning is the most segregated hour of the week." Unfair, for the historical fact is that all black Christians worshipped with white Christians until blacks decided to pull out and worship in the style of their culture (instead of continuing to worship in the style of the white culture).

5.....In 1976, four years after Jeremiah Wright became pastor of Trinity Church, our United Church of Christ elected its first black president. In 2008, I hope the United States of America elects *its* first black president.

BY WILLIS E. ELLIOTT | MAY 1, 2008; 11:45 AM ET

Comments

Please report offensive comments below.

I appreciate your incite into the nature of Trinity U.C.C. The only thing that I take issue with is your "historical fact". I believe that the most overlooked Christian miracle on these shores is the mass conversion of slaves to an brand of Christianity that was peculiarly theirs. They developed a wonderful narrative and sung theology, encapsulated in the spirituals, when most were legally prohibited from reading, writing, or assembling freely. They gathered to pray and raised up ministers from among themselves in illegal but spiritual gatherings. Black nationalists have claimed that whites used Christianity to control the slaves. They tried but the black church did not come out of the church of the master but out of the encounter of the downtrodden with the risen Christ.

I would suggest that you read "The Prayer Tradition of Black Folk" by Harold Carter. Look at the works of Henry Mitchell such as "Black Preaching".

Of course there always have been some blacks in white congregations. However, most of the National Baptists, AME's, and black Pentecostals have an all black religious heritage. In fact with regard to the Pentecostals, many of the early white Pentecostals were ordained by Black ministers and then withdrew themselves. Asuza street was a black church.

POSTED BY: NORMAN DOWE | JULY 6, 2008 9:29 PM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Angela,

You are a fundamentalist PIG.

POSTED BY: UCCER | MAY 5, 2008 1:05 AM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

THERESA

You wrote, ""For we know Him Who said, Vengeance is Mine; I will repay"

Remember, Vengence, not revenge.

We will all be judged, remember Jesus said, "Father forgive them" also Jesus said, "Love one another as I have loved you" and He meant absolutely everyone. There is more to being a Christian than knowing God's Name.

Pray for God's Will and may God bless you and plant a big smile in your heart.

Take care, be ready.

Sincerely, Thomas Paul Moses Baum.

POSTED BY: THOMAS BAUM | MAY 3, 2008 10:56 AM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Good to hear from you again: maybe we are always just a couple of decades out in front of everybody else. How are you doing? My ministry in California is limping along. I miss your words and still remember your sermon at my ordination. "Spoons!" They dug out with spoons! I remember you and Lauree very fondly. How are the boys? Peg is still holding on. She will be 92 this August. Google or UCC me, and get in touch if you (or Bill) get a chance. Rev. C. Kit Wilke

POSTED BY: REV. C. KIT WILKE | MAY 2, 2008 9:15 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

"Do you really think that God asked us to be more forgiving and loving than Him?"

Thomas Baum-

No. Yeshua asks us only to forgive (as He has forgiven us) and to pray for those who hurt us. The only way to be free from the anger and bitterness of being sinned against is through forgiveness.

Its not ours to judge. The LORD is Judge.

Its not ours to seek vengeance. Complete retribution and the meting out of justice rests with Him and He will exact full payment.

"For we know Him Who said, Vengeance is Mine; I will repay"

So, once again we don't agree.

Even so- best wishes.

POSTED BY: THERESA | MAY 2, 2008 4:38 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

THERESA

Do you really think that God asked us to be more forgiving and loving than Him?

Take care, be ready.

Sincerely, Thomas Paul Moses Baum.

POSTED BY: THOMAS BAUM | MAY 2, 2008 3:02 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

BGone-

No religion, no sin?

I suppose you have no pangs of conscience warning you not to commit an act and no sense of guilt when you have harmed another?

Many (if not most) people have a sense of right and wrong- although an ignored conscience will in time become a dulled conscience..

"Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them." Romans 2

There is nothing new in the world. Most societies consider antisocial behavior undesirable -even horrific- acts committed by a sociopath.

The father in Austria who imprisoned his daughter and fathered seven children from her. He has no sin if he has no religion?

BGone says-

"Don't want to be a sinner then don't join a religion."

Saying there is no sin does not expunge the problem of sin. To separate sin from religion- you may make up a new name for it- but sins (the acts) will still be sin. Sin is forever tied to religious law. Everyone who sins breaks the law- in fact.. sin is lawlessness..

POSTED BY: THERESA | MAY 2, 2008 1:51 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

theresa:

Religion defines sin. Sin defines religion.

From the dictionary:

sin, the willful breaking of religious law

Those without religion cannot sin. When President Bush said, "we are all sinners" he was only talking about people with religion. Since the GOP has a patent on religion he was only talking about Republicans.

Don't want to be a sinner then don't join a religion.

POSTED BY: BGONE | MAY 2, 2008 12:36 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Angela-

Its good to know exactly what you believe and why you believe..

Judgment and mercy are attributes of G-d. All will be judged- but not all will receive mercy.

If all were to receive salvation- there would be no need hear the Good News and no need to accept or reject the Gospel.

When John tell us-

"The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."

John is saying the Torah (the Law) has come in flesh to earth. If you sin outside the law- you will perish outside the law. If you sin under the law- you will be judged by the law. Redemption from the law comes through Yeshua Ha'Mashiach- through His sacrificial atonement for sin- through faith in His Blood. Its through His great love that we are given the way to be reconciled to Him.

Angela, we shouldn't be surprised by the resistance to the Gospel on these threads. It is a stumbling block to those under the law and foolishness to those outside the law.

But it is the Key to Life for those of us who have embraced it..

G-d's blessings to you this day, Sister.

POSTED BY: THERESA | MAY 2, 2008 12:17 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

"But from Wright's excesses, the media cherry-picked "inflammatory" sound bites. "

Not true. I heard whole sermons in their full and complete context, and what I heard was worse than the soundbite. Rev. Wright's sermons gave me no way I could misunderstand him. In fact, the media may have been actually being kind to Wright when they gave us the soundbites they did.

This isn't a soundbite issue, and I refuse to believe that I know more about this guy than Obama did after listening to him for 20 years. Quit acting shocked, Obama.

POSTED BY: ALEX | MAY 2, 2008 11:12 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Wow, finally some rational voices on Rev. Wright. Undoubtedly, everyone will agree with some of his comments. (I for example don't think much of AIDS conspiracies.) And his style is bombastic and over-the-top. But most of what he has been saying is plainly the truth. His greatest sin is probably in hurting Obama's chances by continuing to make the news.

Now, as for the news, oh, the news. Isn't proper journalism supposed to be a necessary condition for democracy? Nowadays we might as well be reading the National Inquirer than watching most of cable news.

POSTED BY: JACK | MAY 2, 2008 4:49 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

The being in the burning bush explains how those "sound bytes" are all people hear. If that had been God then folks would hear what God wanted them to hear, the whole story delivered by a devout minister preaching from God's book, the Holy Bible. Is the Bible God's word?

Only if the supernatural being in the burning bush was God. It was Lucifer in the burning bush and Lucifer wins when all that is heard are sound bytes. Why was Reverend Wright preaching from Lucifer's book anyhow?

Don't you imagine money from those poor black folks on the south side is why Jeremiah Wright preaches? Has he done what Jesus told him to do, "sell all his earthly possessions and distribute what he gets to the poor"?

Lucifer lets His reps make all the money they can. I wonder if he or even our panelist here, Reverend Willis Elliott ever gave the "off the shelf -- rich man and poor woman" sermon -- how God loves the poor woman more than the rich man because she gave half of all she had while the rich man gave many more times her amount but it was only a small percentage of all he had?

It's obvious that the media believes the folks who attend Jeremiah Wright's church have "faith in him, Jeremiah Wright." The media needs to be informed that "faith is in God" not preachers.

Obama's faith is in God, required to be a candidate for any elected office even dog catcher. That's why he had to "throw Reverend Jeremiah Wright under the bus" -- demonstrate no faith in his preacher leaving "faith in God" in place. Why can't the media ever get anything straight?

POSTED BY: BGONE | MAY 1, 2008 11:00 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Well. All's I would say, Angela, is, if there' supposedly only one, logically-ineffable God, wouldn't you suppose such a God might be just a weettle bit bigger than demanding abused kids bow to people they know to be liars?

What if, ...all this stuff we hurt each other over, was never 'God' in the first place?

What if, 'God' was never about this in the first place?

Lady knows I sure saw *something,* in my life.

Well this one, and the end of the last one, anyway.

What if 'God' is *bigger* than even 'his' sales reps know.

World big enough for the all of us yet, or must we fight *again?*

It's tiresome.

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | MAY 1, 2008 6:55 PM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

TO ANGELA

I am not "sugar coating" the Gospel, actually the word Gospel means GOOD NEWS does it not?

Did not the angels at Jesus's birth announce, "This is GOOD NEWS that is for ALL PEOPLE"?

If the GOOD NEWS is not ultimately for all than it is not good news at all but good enough news and good enough news is absolutely horrible news.

Did not Jesus say something to the effect that "Heaven and earth shall pass away but My Word shall never pass away", well what do you think, "My Word", He was talking about? He was talking about Himself and He is Pure Love, the Trinity is Pure Love and God has a Plan, what do you think being a Christian is?

Some people speak as if All Prophecy has been fulfilled, well it hasn't been, but it WILL.

I would like to ask a question or so, why does it seem that so many people that call themselves "christian" once they become "christian" they become so judgemental of others rather than looking at themselves? How come they condemn others? Jesus clearly said, "Judge not, lest ye be judged", did He Not? Jesus said, "I have come into the world not to condemn the world but that the world might be saved", did He not?

Some people repent of their sins, yet may not use the terminology that suits you but God knows what is in their heart. Saying words is saying words and God knows the difference between saying words and what comes from the heart, God is God, I'm not, I am just a messenger.

You can underestimate God if you wish, but something to think about: Divine Justice and Divine Mercy go hand in hand.

The bible is not God, God is God.

Take care, be ready.

Sincerely, Thomas Paul Moses Baum.

POSTED BY: THOMAS BAUM | MAY 1, 2008 6:18 PM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Paganplace, I'm really sorry about some things that happened to you and I can honestly say that we've all tried to do the right thing and sometime really bad things happen to people who are kind, giving, loving, helping others in need tu we still do need a savior. When I mention the mystery of God; there are some things that He has revealed to those who would believe and then there are some things that I can't say as I don't have the mind of God but I do know this: There is a Sovereign God that will show mercy to those who humble themselves and in

the end He will judge the world in righteousness. Also, did you ever read the post from earlier. Humility goes a long way. Pride as you can see from this situation with Pastor comes before a fall!

POSTED BY: ANGELA | MAY 1, 2008 4:26 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

"If you are not concerned with the salvation of souls, then you are not a Christian. I totally and humbly agree..."

Will say this, though, no, I'm not concerned with the 'salvation of souls,' because we are not 'damned' in the first place.

I'm one of those lucky-duckoffs that remembers previous lives. It's haunted me since the day I came to consciousness that I hurt some people, while I was *damn* sure I was doing the right thing.

There is no 'original sin' or 'forgiveness' that makes that right. Cause that's just not the world.

You can beat the crap out of a kid over it, but it just doesn't make these things reality, never mind a decent substitute for reason when it comes to an election.

You want strident belief, I spent the first five years of this life trying to report back to my unit. It's not about 'original sin,' it's about, 'What in the Mother's name are we doing to each other.'

It's not about 'needing to be saved,' it's about, 'Holy Mother, how did I get convinced to do that to another bunch of unseen human beings?'

What I was 'saved' from was not 'original sin'

It was from, *not paying attention to what I was doing.*

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | MAY 1, 2008 4:18 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

" Angela:

PaganPlace. There's nothing more to say about this: again, we in our natural state are blinded by the wants, needs and pride of this world. Those without the spirit cannot understand spiritual things as it's foolishness to them. It's part of the mystery of God."

If it's so mysterious to you, could be you better back off.

Go figure.

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | MAY 1, 2008 4:01 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

PaganPlace. There's nothing more to say about this: again, we in our natural state are blinded by the wants, needs and pride of this world. Those without the spirit cannot understand spiritual things as it's foolishness to them. It's part of the mystery of God. I believed just what you believed several years ago but without God humbling you and softening your heart to His message, you will see it just the way you do now. Men (humankind) cannot convert the soul but we are commanded to speak the truth in love. Charles Hadden Spurgeon wants said: If you are not concerned with the salvation of souls, then you are not a Christian. I totally and humbly agree...

POSTED BY: ANGELA | MAY 1, 2008 3:56 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

""We in our fallen state can't understand mercy and justice at the same time""

Again, nonsense. :)

Mercy was me not crushing the windpipe of a man who raped me. Justice was lecturing him at swordpoint while I led him in circles till I was reasonably sure his Christian arse couldn't find my house again. :)

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | MAY 1, 2008 3:55 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

"Paganplace.

"We in our fallen state can't understand mercy and justice at the same time"

Nonsense!

Who taught you that?

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | MAY 1, 2008 3:51 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

I'll note, too, that Christian doctrine strongly identifies, and always has identified, the fear of personal death with the notion the world must be ending.

You know this, right?

Since you guys had power we've never *not* been on the brink of Apocalypse.

Can't say I didn't think so myself in previous lives, and for that I'm sorry. But.

It's.

Tiresome.

You can't end the world with your religion.

You can only hurt people trying.

One thing that Reverend Wright said about your Jesus you could hearken to, is he said Jesus said something about his Dah having people of other tribes and Houses and whatever that means to book people.

Frankly, if he claimed the Pope had to wear pink frilly undies, it'd be worth the whole exercise if someone got it.

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | MAY 1, 2008 3:47 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Paganplace.

We in our fallen state can't understand mercy and justice at the same time. The agnostic and/or atheist belief is that who is Jeus (God in the flesh) to be passive/agressive. That is not what John 3:16 means: It means that He knew from the very beginning that Adam and Eve would think they were wise in their own eyes and of course, since He is God, He had made a way where his mercy and justice would prevail. God doesn't need us but He loves us. Would you want someone you love to just be your robot or would you want them to love you for yourself. Let me ask you a question: A sense of danger excites; a sense of security puts to sleep. A company of gamblers in the sixth story are told that the building is on fire. One of them answers, "We have the key to the fire escape," and all continue the game. Suddenly one exclaims, "The key is lost"; all immediately spring to their feet

and endeavor to escape. Pride and humility are opposites. Those who seek to please self and those who sincerely aim at the approbation of God belong to two entirely different stocks. It is far from a pleasant task for a physician to tell an unsuspecting patient that his or her heart is organically diseased or to announce to a young person engaging in strenuous activities that his lungs are in such a condition he is totally unfit for violent exertions; nevertheless it is the physician's duty to break such news. Now if this principle holds good in connection with our mortal bodies, how much more so with regard to our never dying spirits. True, there are some doctors who persuade themselves that there are times when it is expedient for them to withhold such information from their patients, but a true physician of souls is never justified in concealing the more distasteful aspect of the truth from those who are under his care. If he is to be free from their blood, he must unsparingly expose the plague of their hearts. One incurs no guilt when there is a willingness of mind and a desire of heart to do the thing commanded but no capacity to carry it out. But where there is capacity (competent faculties) but unwillingness, there is guilt— wherever disaffection for God exists so does sin. Man's moral inability consists of an inveterate aversion for God, and it is this corruption of heart which alone has influence to prevent the proper use of the faculties with which he is endowed, and issues in acts of sin and rebellion against God.

POSTED BY: ANGELA | MAY 1, 2008 3:46 PM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

'Truth' is cheap.

Information costs.

If you want an easy way out, take your 'truth' and make a go of it.

If you want a license to rule, consider that it ain't gonna happen.

You think yourself mighty and righteous, ...stop spending the meek's' inheritance.

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | MAY 1, 2008 3:41 PM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Wow Theresa; God bless you; absolutely the gospel truth.

Your Sister, in Christ...

POSTED BY: ANGELA | MAY 1, 2008 3:34 PM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

"But who has possession of the whole truth? We are pilgrims on earth. Everyone is just a visitor here for a short while. Life is a wonderful adventure AND a place of shadows.."

Can't argue, there, you're talking to a Pagan who consecrates her flashlights.

But that 'John 3:16' is the most blatant piece of passive-aggression we've mischanced to be subject to in this Western civilization.

It says, 'You're so inherently horrible according to God that only kneeling to the same God's semi-human sacrifice of his own son can possibly 'save' you from the same idea of 'sin' that supposedly 'doomed' you in the first place.

All I can say about the Christian idea of Jesus going through Hell to 'save people from 'sin' is' ...what if it *worked?*

What if it's not a cargo cult.

What if, if it ever needed to be in the first place,

What if it *worked?*

Can we drive on, now?

Seems a lot of people who insist I accept Jesus as my Savior are pretty convinced that his little exercise didn't actually conquer that 'original sin' after all...

That 'John 3:16' says nothing but what any abuser says, 'Something inarticulable is wrong with you, so you must obey.'

It's one of my little rules in life.

I don't respond to passive-aggression. Even if I want to.

And if your God ain't big enough to let someone like me run around, pardon if I submit that in our Republic, we might actually wanna look at candidates' policies?

"I will pray as I often do that G-d reveal His truth and His will to me (and to you too :). :

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | MAY 1, 2008 3:32 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

I mean.

Do you understand... The difference here, Oh, Old Reverend Guy?

People are afraid the liberal guy Obama is gonna change his tune to like, oppress the white race or something, cause he went to a church where a 60's guy, when given national spotlight, said some 60's stuff...

As opposed to, say, a candidate like McCain, who's actually quite publicly *changed his policies to accommodate his white Fundie preacher supporters to promote war and torture and exploitation of workers, etc etc.)

Obama has remained consistent.

McCain has shown himself malleable to extremist preachers.

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | MAY 1, 2008 3:05 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

"I have come into the world not to condemn the world but that the world might be saved"

Thomas Baum-

This is echoed in John 3:16-18

"For G-d so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For G-d did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him. Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the Name of G-d's one and only Son."

You ask-

"Doesn't it seem that there are some that are more "Christ-like" in their hearts that don't believe in God whereas some that believe in God are anything but "Christ-like" in their hearts?"

When I consider the holiness of G-d, I understand "all my righteous acts are like filthy rags". No matter how I might desire to achieve the perfection of the law- I can never earn my way back to G-d through my kindness and good works. Like the foreshadowing of the "blood on the doorposts" in the Passover- I need the Blood of Yeshua to cover my unrighteousness and redeem me from the law.

So- I can't judge others through their actions. I don't believe their actions will ensure their salvation.

You ask-

"Do you think that God is more interested in how we treat each other rather than a bunch of hollow words?"

I believe G-d is interested in both- Like the father of the prodigal son- He speaks Words to guide His children and desires that His children use wisdom in their choices. And when a child rejects Him and suffers from the loss- He will run to embrace the returning child.

So- we disagree.

But who has possession of the whole truth? We are pilgrims on earth. Everyone is just a visitor here for a short while. Life is a wonderful adventure AND a place of shadows..

I will pray as I often do that G-d reveal His truth and His will to me (and to you too :).

Best wishes.

POSTED BY: THERESA | MAY 1, 2008 3:03 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

""'God so loved the world,' not just the black community." In his 4.25.08 conversation on Bill Moyer's Journal, Jeremiah Wright quoted from the Gospel of John 3:16 "

You do realize of course, that that passage they keep waving at sports events is profoundly-and-obviously an encapsulation of the passive-aggression of those who *want* religion to rule America, not the actual candidate in question?

I mean, base principles here.

'God' 'So loved the world' (he supposedly made so horrible that without some great amount of grace he would otherwise obliterate unless everyone were very, very, good, and maybe he'd wipe it out anyway, but 'forgive' some of those he'd otherwise torture forever...'

That's yer 'John 3:16.'

Gods, it's no *wonder* so many Christians can't wrap their heads around the idea Obama's his own man.

This *isn't about* *you.* This is about our nation.

Gods.

Get over it.

You don't like this preacher, listen to Obama, don't go running to a guy who changed his policies on war and torture to *appeal to Hagee.*

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | MAY 1, 2008 3:00 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Thomas Baum, I have to ask you this: everything Theresa stated in her post was God's word. Also, let me ask you something; aren't those who don't believe in God: kind, giving, loving. I know several people who are right now atheists. If they died today: do you believe from God's word: they would go to heaven. How is it that I always, always read your posts and they're very warm but not preaching the Gospel. What do you teach. What's wrong with a lot of pastors and teachers who tell people just say a prayer and ask Jesus to come into your heart

without repentance. You see over and over again in scripture: Repent! How about all the parables in the bible. Do you believe those who don't believe in Him will be with Him; how can you tell people that. What does Matthew 5:16 state: 17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. 19 Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. How about the wide and narrow road. We can't just teach the mercy and forgiveness of God. That's why people say oh, I've done everything under the son but God is a forgiving God; yes, most definitely: He's Love but He's also a Righteous Judge. Do you feel that those who tell people the truth of the Gospel are unloving and judgmental? What's more loving than to tell people the truth. What does Peter tell the crowd in Acts 32:36-38 "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." 37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" 38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

One of my sisters in Christ said to me the other day: I spent so many years in church and I never really understood the gospel; as she stated: she didn't see herself clearly: in the eyes of Scripture. She stated: she was kind, giving and loving. She realized she was a sinner along time ago but never walked in the opposite direction of her sin. If people are not convicted of their sin, they will come to Jesus for the wrong reasons and this is the new gospel in the pulpits now. We should speak the truth in love, not sugar-coat the gospel

POSTED BY: ANGELA | MAY 1, 2008 2:31 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

THERESA

Thank you for your reply and your greeting and I also wish you the best.

Jesus is Who He said that He Is and however you feel that God wants you to live your life, live it that way, I would never tell you or anyone else to do it differently, however we all have different "jobs", so to speak, and mine is to speak.

Jesus said many things, not just the ones that you wrote, when asked by the apostles about who can be saved, He replied, "With man it is impossible but with God All Things are possible", I take that as to be all GOOD THINGS. He also said, "I have come into the world not to condemn the world but that the world might be saved".

As far as being born again for one thing we seem to put our own time limit on it but God didn't. As far as becoming "childlike" as opposed to childish, doesn't it sometimes seem that some that call themselves "christian" seem very childish as opposed to "childlike"? Doesn't it seem that there are some that are more "Christ-like" in their hearts that don't believe in God whereas some that believe in God are anything but "Christ-like" in their hearts?

Have you ever heard the phrase, actions speak louder than words, do you think that God is more interested in how we treat each other rather than a bunch of hollow words, remember when He said, "I desire mercy, not sacrifice", mere words ain't mercy.

I am just a messenger, FOLLOW JESUS, don't follow me but night is approaching and I am here to tell the whole world that God's Victory will be for the entire human race and for all of creation as in {the new heavens and the new earth}.

I have an awesome responsibility and I don't take it lightly, if you would be so kind as to pray for God's Will to Be Done as it is written in the prayer that Jesus gave to the apostles when they asked Him to teach them how to pray, I would be most appreciative.

Take care, be ready, hang in there He hung in there for us.

Sincerely, Thomas Paul Moses Baum.

Thomas Baum-

You post to correct me for "misinterpreting" the words of Yeshua.

Maybe you have an intimate knowledge of G-d and can understand His deep Truths because you have had a supernatural experience.

But I base all my belief and understanding on the Word of G-d past down to us through the ages.

You say-

"Seems to me that so many want to tell others that they know how to get to Jesus and only the way that they know is the proper way whereas Jesus said NO SUCH THING."

Yeshua did say many things:

John 3:3 -- Yeshua answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Matt. 18:3 --(Yeshua) said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven."

Luke 13:3 --(Yeshua said) "I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.

John 6:53 --Then Yeshua said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you."

And from John 8-

-- Then Yeshua spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

-- "I am One who bears witness of Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness of Me." Then they said to Him, "Where is Your Father?" Yeshua answered, "You know neither Me nor My Father. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also." And He said to them, "You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."

-- Yeshua said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM."

You say-

"Jesus forced Himself on no one, did He?"

No, He doesn't. He has given us free will. The choice is ours:

Deut 30:15-18 -- See, I set before you today Life and prosperity, death and destruction. For I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess. But if your heart turns away and you are not obedient, and if you are drawn away to bow down to other Gods and worship them, I declare to you this day that you will certainly be destroyed..

You say-

"God has a Plan."

I agree. We disagree on the perimeters of His plan.

Best wishes to you.

POSTED BY: THERESA | MAY 1, 2008 7:23 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

THERESA

You wrote, "Jesus said, I am the way the truth and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but through me."

Maybe you should read what you wrote, Jesus said He is the Way to The Father but He did not say anything about the way to Him, did He?

Seems to me that so many want to tell others that they know how to get to Jesus and only the way that they know is the proper way whereas Jesus said NO SUCH THING.

Doesn't it seem that so many people seem to want to tell others how to live their life?

Jesus forced Himself on no one, did He?

God has a Plan, I don't underestimate it, in fact it is much better than some think that it is and it is much better than some want it to be.

Take care, be ready.

Sincerely, Thomas Paul Moses Baum.

POSTED BY: THOMAS BAUM | APRIL 30, 2008 7:11 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

And another one misses the point. Lying from the pulpit for what ever reason is unjustifiable.

POSTED BY: GARYD | APRIL 29, 2008 10:22 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

QUESTION:

"Jesus said, I am the way the truth and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but through me.
DO YOU BELIEVE THIS AND DO YOU THINK ISLAM IS A WAY TO SALVATION "???"

Rev. Jeremiah Wright's ANSWER:

"Jesus also said, other sheep have I who are not of this fold".

Willis Elliot-

Yeshua was speaking to His beloved people (the Jews) of the Gentile believers from all nations.

Do you agree with Jeremiah Wright's statement?

Has he knowingly and deliberately misquoted scripture out of context?

Please read the scripture (in context) he flippantly quoted to the laughs and snorts of his listeners:

John 10

Yeshua said:

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But He who enters by the door is the Shepherd of the sheep. To Him the

doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear His voice; and He calls His own sheep by name and leads them out. And when He brings out His own sheep, He goes before them; and the sheep follow Him, for they know His voice. Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers."

Yeshua used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them.

Then Yeshua said to them again,

"Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have Life, and that they may have it more abundantly."

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd."

POSTED BY: THERESA | APRIL 28, 2008 10:43 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Willis: Thank you for sharing your perspective.

In past generations blacks were thought to be less than human. Human slavery and in the years following Jim Crow until the present the terror of lynchings of blacks, native americans, jews and catholics is part of the American Story. Today we have an opportunity to face the ugly picture of our past and consciously turn away from thinking errors and false mis guided belief.

I am grateful that Pastor Wright has taken time to speak to the question of race and religion in America. Jim Turturro

POSTED BY: THE REV. JAMES CARROLL-TURTURRO, UCC | APRIL 28, 2008 4:50 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Thank you for your analysis of the Black Church and your comment, "I cannot image any greater distortion of a preacher's message and ministry." The sadness for me is the fact that we may never bridge that gap of having others understand what our needs are and have been as African American people. Especially, when we are in a time when people are saying, "Enough already, stop your whining." The treatment in stores, in housing, at work, etc. still exists although not nearly as bad. All you need is one time for a child (I work with children) to say something that takes you back to a time when you had hoped you would never hear certain things again. The Black Church has not filled me with hatred even though it has often been our only place to talk about real racial issues. In fact, my belief in the Word of God has challenged me to examine my own beliefs and to make sure I am loving and giving to people of all colors. When I faced my own fears, things became so much better for me. To ignore race, color, gender, etc. is not the way but to embrace our differences and learn from each other will always be the way.

POSTED BY: MARY | APRIL 28, 2008 3:30 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

I been a Christian for 31 years and there should not be a black or white church. That is where the problem really is and that sin comes from the heart. We as Christians should remember the Great Commission and preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and if you do that everything else will be set in order. Getting Save, Sanctify and fill with the Holy Ghost should be the message to live a life in Christ our Lord. A spiritual heart transplant will take care of the other stuff.

POSTED BY: GBAKERT | APRIL 28, 2008 3:27 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

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