

"Why Do Low-Wage Workers Have Hope?"

By nurture and perhaps also by nature, I inherited from my mother - alongside many good things - worry. Half-successfully, I fight it off with this quotation from the Bible's King James Version (Proverbs 3:5): "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." That has always helped me "get through tough financial times." That is my plain response to the plain wording of the current "On Faith" question:

"What's your response to this question from a Post national poll of low-wage workers: 'What role does God or your faith play in helping you get through tough financial times?'"

1....."On Faith," however, plainly wants my response to another question: "What's your response to the responses to this question from a Post national poll of low-wage workers....?"

2.....First, I must restate the question into the words used in the poll-question: "How important a role does religion or faith in God play in helping you get through tough times?" Here are the percentages: 57%, "very important"; 21%, "somewhat important"; 8%, "not too important"; 13%, "not at all important."

3.....In reading the poll results, "hope" is the word that jumped out at me. (The Washington Post's article was titled "Hardest Hit: Hurt and Hope Among Low-Wage Workers.") Despite their squeeze between stagnant incomes and rising prices, outsourcing and other threats of job-loss, and the testimony of 75% that it's "hard to find good jobs," these people are living more by faith and hope than by fear and discouragement.

4....I would like to ask them, "Why do you have hope?" The variety of responses I believe I would get would reveal inner sustaining riches. To the seven classical virtues, the early Christians added the enduring values of faith/hope/love (for example, First Corinthians 13:13). Hope is in the middle: faith and love feed and sustain hope.

5.....Faith is TRUST expressible in beliefs. Many times the Bible advises, "Trust in the LORD" or "in God." (The Hebrew word means, trust, rely on, have confidence in.) Why trust in God? The answer in the verse I quoted is, for guidance. Often, the reason is protection. This second sense appears in the Declaration of Independence, whose signatories proclaimed "a firm reliance upon the protection of Divine Providence." America's Founders trusted in God and produced a commonwealth still worth relying on: most of America's low-wage workers have hope partly because they believe in America as well as in God.

6....But it's hard to keep going, to keep trusting, to keep hoping, without social support, without love. Every Sunday I see, in church, many low-wage workers practicing their "religion" in a community of mutual concern and affection, a community of love. The Christian religion is not only private (i.e., personal faith in God through Jesus Christ); it includes participation in the Christian community, the fellowship and feeder of love. Though not all church-attenders are Christians, all Christians go to church: anyone claiming to be a Christian but not going to church is self-deceived.

7.....Low-wage workers have hope because they have faith-trust and love.

BY WILLIS E. ELLIOTT | AUGUST 11, 2008; 8:23 AM ET

Comments

Please report offensive comments below.

The Rev writes:

"Low-wage workers have hope because they have faith-trust and love."

So I take it you are reducing your income to minimum wage.

.

.

[sound of crickets chirping]

.

.

Hypocrite.

People like you are why I have forbidden my young children any contact with self-proclaimed religious Christians or any church.

POSTED BY: ELLIE | AUGUST 15, 2008 2:34 PM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Further to Mr Elliot:

"Since you (wrongly) assumed that I could come up with nothing but the one verse "

You sir, are the one who assumed incorrectly. If you could have only come up with one, I would have been terribly dissappointed, but The Revelation of John? Seriously? I admit I didn't see that one coming... It's to be taken literally then? Is The 'first day of the week' as absolute and literal in that book as the four horsemen? Or do we weave in and out through a swirling ocean of parable, reality, vision, metaphor, prophecy and symbolism here as well, a whirlpool that only specific certified church elites can properly interpret?

Simply put, the literal-ness you accuse me of is required for a common, simple man to understand the bible. This is the book we were

given, the only one that spans denominations of christianity (though not completely) All the other books are essentially christian WIKI's. The only alternative is to seek an interpreter, a church. This is exactly where it gets tricky. There are many, many church-ordained interpretations of the bible. They vary widely between the denominations, and in fact led to the creation of those many denominations. There is no single interpretation of Hebrews, Revelation or even Matthew's accounts of Christ's own words.. By joining a church and accepting it's rites and creeds however you have seperated yourself from a direct relationship with the mind and heart of christ by allowing/demanding others'interpretations to guide you. Which church exactly should I be attending sir, to be a christian? Will any church do?

POSTED BY: POSSUM | AUGUST 12, 2008 5:29 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Mr. Elliot:

""The Twelve" (his inner circle of disciples) was the defining unit (later called "church") of the new religion,"

His 'church' was people, not an institution or building, set of rituals or ceremonies. His church wandered about in loose, informal groups, lacking central organization (or collection plates) and spread the word to newbies. Since that time the church man built was corrupted, centralized, books burned, usurpers slaughtered in the name of christ's church. Hundreds of widely varying forms of 'christian churches' from ritualistic and icon worshipping catholicism to snake handling, tongue-shouting evangelicals, the social club- methodists, the unitarians, the mega-churches in texas (six flags over jesus). Churches that condemn gays vs. churches that welcome them openly, women pastors vs. men-only, sprinklers vs. dunkers, fire and brimstone to self fulfilment gurus. (Jerry Falwell to Joel Osteen) Rev Wright's righteous anger to the Pope's merciful blessings.

By your own words attending any church is a solid marker /requirement of Christianity. Yet the Lord himself may not look so kindly at which Christian church you attend, am I right? Would he not rather you simply offer hope, encouragement and support for a troubled fellow christian over a cup of coffee at a sidewalk cafe than attend a tightly scripted incense-enhanced latin liturgy? Though Christs body may be 'the church' I sincerely doubt many of the 'churches' that exist today are even close to what he had in mind. You? May I toss a scripture back to you? "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

POSTED BY: POSSUM | AUGUST 12, 2008 4:42 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

FURTHER RESPONSE TO POSSUM:

As I said, I did not exhaust the NT's specific support for church-going as a Christian essential.

Since you (wrongly) assumed that I could come up with nothing but the one verse I referred you to, I should add a bit more.

1

To be a "disciple" of Jesus included being one-in-group, the band of disciples. When Jesus said "Follow me," he meant join my group.

"One disciple" is an oxymoron. Christian corporate worship is a lineal descendant of Jesus' disciples worshiping together regularly with him.

2

Christianity was born "the first day of the week" (Sunday) when Jesus was resurrected (Matthew 28.1; Mark 16.2; Luke 24.1; John 20.1). Even within the NT (Revelation 1.10), this day of the week was called "the Lord's day," when Christians came together to worship. The author of Revelation was in exile, & could not come together with other Christians for regular Sunday worship; but his heart was attuned to "the Lord's Day," & ready for the visions which began on that day & of which he writes in the remainder of what is titled, in the NT, "The Revelation of John."

POSTED BY: WILLIS E. ELLIOTT, PANELIST | AUGUST 12, 2008 4:25 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

RESPONSE TO POSSUM:

Like fundamentalists, you expect the New Testament to provide everything you need to know about the Christian religion. The NT begins the flow of early Christian literature, which reflects early Christian life-&-tradition. Christian communal worship "the first day of the week" (Sunday, distinguished from the Jewish Sabbath [seventh day]) was clearly the practice throughout early-church history, & has been the practice ever since. Your demand for a command rooting this practice is, historically & literarily, an over-demand (in the fundamentalist-literalist direction). / In the Mass. town where I most recently lived, you couldn't vote in town meetings if your church-attendance was irregular (a law that died in 1833). Irregular church-attendance canceled your status as a Christian, & Christians in good standing were the only residents with full citizen-rights, including the franchise (right to vote). / More evidence of your literal-mindedness. Instead of dealing with my other evidence, beginning with the fact that Jesus' "The Twelve" (his inner circle of disciples) was the defining unit (later called "church") of the new religion, you limited your response to the one verse I referred you to - to illustrate my point, not to exhaust the NT's support for what I was saying.

RESPONSE TO PAGAN PLACE:

You say "Providence" means "that which has been provided," & deny its future reference. But in context, the Declaration of Independence uses "Divine Providence" ONLY of the future: the implicit prayer of the Founders was that "Divine Providence" would provide "protection" for their fragile experiment in freedom.

POSTED BY: WILLIS E. ELLIOTT, PANELIST | AUGUST 12, 2008 3:32 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Dear Possum -

Pretty good counter to the good Rev's selective quoting of Hebrews.

I think that ministers forget that while selective quoting of scripture tends to work during a sermon delivered live to a congregation, it's less effective when offered in a forum where others can check references for context, as you have done in this instance.

POSTED BY: MR MARK | AUGUST 12, 2008 2:53 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Replying to Mr. Elliot:

"(3) Hebrews 10:25 puts it this way: "Do not neglect to meet together"

Context check:

24. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. 25. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

That's it? Hardly a commandment level requirement is it? 'Let us consider', let us 'not give up' as others have? Really? It does not even say 'regularly' or weekly or 'in god's house'. It appears to me that this 'requirement' could be met by any two or more people of like faith in an informal conversation over lunch. It's a giant leap to get to "anyone claiming to be a Christian but not going to church is self-deceived". Sorry Mr. Elliot, I don't buy that at all. With all due respect, you're blowing this up to fulfill your own definition.

POSTED BY: POSSUM | AUGUST 12, 2008 2:37 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Or as we say in the old school, 'trust but verify, and make sure the back door's unlatched when anyone starts talking Godly authority.'

The bothayas.you know it's been calculated how much of our nation will become wasteland if our system falls apart and the food stops coming? How much of our 'secure heartland' becomes a 'death zone' where nothing edible will survive the fleeing refugees?

You righteous people, Bgone, Reverend, *don't expect you have to live with the consequences of what the both of youse advocate.*

But someone will.

Someone that's going to need to know some things.

Basic things.

Things that don't happen to be about sex or moral absolutism. Just life.

If you guys get to have your apocalypse, I know you don't figure on being around to pick up the pieces.

But I'm a simple Pagan, and I do.

So. If you'll kindly govern yourselves and make yourselves *useful* it would be appreciated.

Any Gods got a problem with that, they can go through me. Dig?

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | AUGUST 11, 2008 7:15 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

It's possible you don't realize this, Bgone, (Or Rev. eliot.)

The bothayas believe in a world ruled by some pair of a 'Righteous Lord Not To be Questioned' and a Price of Lies.

I say that the bothayas bringing us to the edge of ruin by taking sides in such a belief means it'd be prudent enough to say sayonara to both of you, and say, 'Might not be the worst idea ever to learn how to grow food.'

Call me crazy.

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | AUGUST 11, 2008 7:09 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Meanwhile, btw, Reverend, apart from rude distractions.... I do appreciate your age, and any wisdom you might glean from that.. But I suspect that it'd probably be more useful for you to be teaching some practical skills rather than telling people that had a few lifetimes since you was last squeezed out what to expect from death.

Frankly, Reverend, I'd much rather hear of you what you saw and smelled and did and lived.

I care not for your Apocalypse. But if you grew up on an old farm, tell us about harrowing a field, not harrowing Hell.

Give us kids a break.

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | AUGUST 11, 2008 7:02 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

"It's real simple. Crime pays. That's why the poor resort to it. Use a gun and go to jail if you get caught."

Horse-hockey, Bgone. This is the notion rich suburbanites have sold to them about urban people and urban lives all their lives, and use it as a justification to keep the poor living in shacks.

Places where I have *lived* were places where my suburbanite upbringing taught me you couldn't *walk through* without getting mugged.

This is not so. Yes, violence happens, but not as the local news portrays cause they can't support real journalism. People *live* there. People's *grandmothers* live there. Occasionally someone gets shot, but it was rarely someone anyone was aiming at. Plenty of people live in urban neighborhoods feeling just as safe under the illusion 'it can never happen here' as anywhere else.

Since the Seventies, suburban people walk into any place with a shady side of the street and figure they're going to be immediately mugged by enterprising lazy people.

This just isn't so.

This is someone's *home* you are scared of, Bgone.

Frankly, I have no particular position on which side of an artificial notion of a God Of Good And Evil I ought to be bending knee to, cause I care for neither.

Stop pretending urban people aren't people.

By my heart's blood, one thing's for sure. They're people.

Spud.

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | AUGUST 11, 2008 6:45 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

I know Jesus said, "the poor..." I was trying to avoid advertising for Barak Obama who began his career "helping poor folks." Actually, he helped ungrateful Jeremiah Wright squeeze nickles out of the poor. Was that what Jesus had in mind? Isn't there a parable, the rich man and the poor woman and the percentage of what they had that they, "gave to God?" That wasn't intended to put the hell-fire squeeze on the rich was it? Finally, if there are no rich then there are no poor either because of relativity so Jesus may as well have said what He meant.

Is there any freedom at Liberty University? I did include "Chancellor" in "the fruitful one's" list of titles all gained after seeing the error of his bootlegging career. Reckon there's any alcoholics on his list of fruits? Probably not since he was only an apprentice.

It's real simple. Crime pays. That's why the poor resort to it. Use a gun and go to jail if you get caught. Use a Bible and get the same results without the jail, so far, except in China, (1/5th of the worlds population). Other than jail what else may I suppose crime and religion don't have in common?

POSTED BY: BGONE | AUGUST 11, 2008 4:26 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Let's put it this way, Reverend. When the Founding Fathers said, 'God,' or 'Creator' or 'Providence,' it was meant to *include* your personal religion, not sign away our nation to it.

Do you understand these words?

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | AUGUST 11, 2008 4:02 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Ah. Nice.

Hello, rev. Elliot. :)

"RESPONSE TO PAGAN PLACE

1

You said "no" when I said that America's Founders trusted in "God," on whom they declared "a firm reliance" for "protection." Instead of "God" as a synonym for their use of "Divine Providence," you claim "Deist/nonsectarian" as their meaning."

No, I claimed that they knew what they were saying when they said 'Providence,' ie, 'that which has in fact been provided, ' not 'Promises of future rewards for bad behavior from the King-God.'

Enlightenment, remember?

Modern American Fundamentalism wasn't even a glint in the not-yet-born Jonathan Edwards' nightmarish eyes, ...just something similar to the receding nightmares of the Salem Witch Trials and the Protestant Reformation in Europe.

They were actually trying to be different from the events of the time and what was to them detailed and recent history.

When they said 'Providence,' they didn't mean 'Televangelist version of the Christian God, they meant Providence with a capital P and a period.

"2

Your claim cancels their word "protection": Deism teaches a far-off deity uninvolved in human affairs--certainly not one who is about to "protect" anybody or any cause."

It does? Or are you just only capable of seeing 'protection' as coming from a particular personified and intervening God that can be appeased by scraping and bowing and spanking each other?

They. Were. Not. Thinking. In. Your. Modern. Terms. Reverend.

" Theism ("God," for short) teaches the divine origin of & care for the universe, including human life: America's Founders had "a firm reliance" on GOD for "protection.""

I'm a theist. I don't believe in your God as what you say he is. But a theist.

Maybe your shorthand isn't definitive in the way you demand.

"3

But as the ancient Romans said, "Veritas in media stat" (Truth stands in the middle)."

I hate to break it to you, but the ancient Romans, while nothing like Christians portray them as if they were all living the life of Nero... but rather almost as hung-up as modern Protestants, just over somewhat different things...

Well, if the Romans were always right, we wouldn't be talking about *this,* now, would we?

" There was a deistic element in the thinking of many of our Founders, as there is even in the Bible: God is far, transcendent, as well as (as theism affirms) near, immanent."

Many Christians of the time found the idea of an 'immanent' God heretical.

Personally, I believe in an 'immanent' God/dess. I say Goddess.

There's nothing in the words of the Founding Fathers that actually favors your view over mine, and, if you want to speak to their intentions, much of them doing their best *not* to proclaim themselves theocratic authority.

You do all the attaching of your assumptions to their words, Reverend, and seem willing to undermine the Constitution in order to command your interpretation.

This, I say 'No,' to.

You quote Darwin as a 'theist' for speaking, ...Deistically.' Then try to insist he's no authority cause he's anti-theist.

The funny thing is, both science and the Constitution *stop being all that complicated if you just stop trying to appropriate both for your particular monotheist demands.*

Cause that's how they is.

How bout you?

If I say 'No' to any God, that's serious bidness. And *my* bidness.

But I'm just talking to *you.*

RESPONSE TO BGONE

1

"By their fruits you will know them," said Jesus.

A fruit of Jerry Falwell is Liberty University, which you might check out on Google.

2

No, Jesus did not say "The rich you will have always with you." He said "The poor...."

POSTED BY: WILLIS E. ELLIOTT, PANELIST | AUGUST 11, 2008 3:23 PM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

RESPONSE TO PAGAN PLACE

1

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2

Your claim cancels their word "protection": Deism teaches a far-off deity uninvolved in human affairs--certainly not one who is about to "protect" anybody or any cause. Theism ("God," for short) teaches the divine origin of & care for the universe, including human life: America's Founders had "a firm reliance" on GOD for "protection."

3

But as the ancient Romans said, "Veritas in media stat" (Truth stands in the middle). There was a deistic element in the thinking of many of our Founders, as there is even in the Bible: God is far, transcendent, as well as (as theism affirms) near, immanent. As a technical term, call it deistic theism. God sets impersonal processes going (e.g., tectonic plates which clash & produce tsunamis), & compassionately addresses human need (even coming himself, in & as Jesus, to suffer with & for us). Darwin spoke of this in the last paragraph of the first printing of THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES: life "originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one," from which "endless forms...have been, and are being evolved."

POSTED BY: WILLIS E. ELLIOTT, PANELIST | AUGUST 11, 2008 3:12 PM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

"Why Do Low-Wage Workers Have Hope?"

They can always do like Pastor Dr Reverend Chancellor Jerry Falwell. He was poor once before he found God. Jerry never tired of telling how he "invested" the meager savings he managed being an assistant bootlegger to become a super successful man of God.

You, Dr Elliott are an expert on these matters so perhaps you can tell us what happened to Jerry. Makes sense to me that the devil known to reside in whiskey, (why they call liquor spirits) got loose while he was making a delivery and convinced him IT was God like what happened to Moses after he killed that fellow.

There's always hope for the impoverished. Some turn to crime and then find God, both in and out of prison. No doubt about it, God is worth a lot more than guns when it comes to relieving poverty. Jerry Falwell is a stellar example of a criminal that found God, in a whiskey bottle or somewhere. Was it, "in the act" of committing the crime with a strong desire to not, "do the time" or did he, "see the light" on coffee break?

Jesus said, "the rich you will have with you always. Don't fight'em, Join'em. Take up your Bibles, threaten'em with the fires of hell, pass the plate and thou shalt be become both rich and righteous. Remind'em my heavenly father loves a cheerful giver. It is far better to give than receive so give of yourself and you will be blessed with God's receipts."

POSTED BY: BGONE | AUGUST 11, 2008 2:50 PM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

garyd sez:

"There is little the government can do for you that you cannot do better for yourself."

Hmmm?

How about building roads, bridges and tunnels? How about maintaining an army? How about public schools? How about holding elections? How about providing police and fire departments?

How about all the other things government provides that you take for granted?

POSTED BY: MR MARK | AUGUST 11, 2008 2:44 PM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

RESPONSE TO POSSUM

You ask for New Testament evidence that anyone thinking it possible to be a Christian alone, without regular participation in the Christian community (for short, "going to church"), is "self-deceived." (1) Jesus worked mainly with a group, his disciples; the Church, existing as churches, continue this communality. (2) The NT expression "in Christ" means being both in communion with Christ & in the Christian community. (3) Hebrews 10:25 puts it this way: "Do not neglect to meet together...."

Your objection to my use of "the Christian religion" is "absurd" in that you falsely assume me to think of it as a "single institution or entity." At the University of Hawaii I taught "the Hindu religion": do you imagine that I taught it as though it were "a single institution or entity"? Indeed, in teaching there "The World's Great Religions," I could not say that any one of them was "a single institution or entity." No scholar could take "the Christian religion" to refer to "a focused, single-minded body of worshippers."

POSTED BY: WILLIS E. ELLIOTT, PANELIST | AUGUST 11, 2008 2:34 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

" garyd:

"Mr. Mark if you look to government in tough times it will fail you more often than not. World War II ended the great Depression not FDR and his statist cronies in congress. In fact every time they got their way during the 30's things got worse."

Nonsense. Without the WPA we would not have had the infrastructure to retool factories, outproduce the Axis, and we would be speaking German now.

Without *government,* any involvement in the war would have worsened the economic stratification, and the likes of Prescott Bush would have taken their financial support of the Nazis and made most of America a colonialist client state. The Japanese would have got the Pacific and we'd be selling resources and cheap labor to both sides, and the once-lamented 'trusts' made famous by 'trust-busters' would be laughing all the short distance to the bank on freshly-unrolled carpets in their very fine beaver hats.

Just cause it doesn't immediately produce profit through 'supply-side' 'trickle-down' obfuscations doesn't mean it's bad, Gary.

National Socialism wasn't 'socialism' as in sharing, it was about nationalizing society for industrial and corporate interests. The unrestrained capitalists here were in fact all for it, right on down to Eugenics experiments in good old Connecticut and Nazi rallies in Manhattan.

You wouldn't like to see that here.

Bush tries to keep saying, 'Our Ever-benevolent corporate overlords will *surely* stop poisoning us *voluntarily,* as long as we get all those inconvenient checks on their rapacious power out of the way.... Instead of aggressively marketing bigger and bigger cars in an energy crisis and using predator financing to prop all that up...

It won't be like the Seventies... Really.

Bullfeathers.

People that champion 'small government' might abolish any support for arts and education, but they *increase* the size of government in order to run up huge public debts and put the money in the hands of the big corporations.

Borrow *koffloads* from China on the public bill to finance a bloody stupid war, and of course most of the money goes to the corporations, who insist on the public financing their roads and bailing them out with *more* public money. when their predatory lending mysteriously results in the value of the property they screwed the working class out of plummeting in value because they repossessed too much...

Forget about this 'government is bad' thing.

You wanna look to the past, consider this is the same thing that you get when you give the 'robber barons' free rein.

If that had been left to go on, never mind having the infrastructure to *fight* the Nazis, the nazis might have just sent over Goebbels to say, 'You're our kind of people. Let me help with the PR.'

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | AUGUST 11, 2008 2:12 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

You know, Reverend, this is one of those questions so readily-interpretable by Fundies as ...'Any hope must be our Conservative Christian hope, cause that's what we, the richer ones, believe.'

""a firm reliance upon the protection of Divine Providence." America's Founders trusted in God and produced a commonwealth still worth relying on:"

No, they trusted in Deist/nonsectarian 'Divine Providence' and *produced a Commonwealth* by deliberate effort. One that needs care and maintenance and human will and vigilance to *continue* to be able to rely on.

Providence is that which has been 'provided,' in some views, not a prop for bad policy, under a presumption the monotheist God will clean up after you.

" most of America's low-wage workers have hope partly because they believe in America as well as in God. "

Everyone has some kind of hope, Reverend, ...even the rich. It doesn't make anyone smarter or better, but when you're less distracted, you feel more in need of recognizing it.

When the Founding Fathers said 'Providence' or even 'God,' they didn't mean what you mean.

Hope is not something to be appropriated or enslaved, or even trapped in a box, in certain Pagan myth people don't really understand.

It's the thing we keep most dear and most desperately, when all ills seem loosed on the world.

One day, though we will 'hope outside the box.'

Stop crediting the box.

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | AUGUST 11, 2008 1:50 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Mr. Mark if you look to government in tough times it will fail you more often than not. World War II ended the great Depression not FDR and his statist cronies in congress. In fact every time they got their way during the 30's things got worse.

There is little the government can do for you that you cannot do better for yourself.

POSTED BY: GARYD | AUGUST 9, 2008 9:17 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Daniel

I have no angst over or desire to debate, with anyone who terms the Constitution , " a dead end argument".

However –

When you state "I say, thank God for the Supreme Court. Because of it, we have only had one Civil War".

I respectfully direct you to the 1857 Taney Supreme Courts decision in Dred Scott v. Sanford.

Scott, a black slave sued for his freedom and lost it to this Courts decision.

This same Court also held that the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional. Congress had forged this agreement that forbid slavery in many areas of the South only to have it brushed aside by Chief Justice Taney.

It is historical fact due to these Taney Court rulings that the tension created by and opposition ensuing from these low point rulings ~facilitated~ the United States one and only Civil War.

regards

POSTED BY: 4TH WATCH | AUGUST 8, 2008 8:10 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

4th watch

"The Constitution never stated that only courts will give meaning to the laws and the Constitution."

The power is implied, and has been settled for a very long time.

Why are you so bothered by it now?

This is a dead-end worry and a dead-end argument. Maybe you should let go of it, and get some other thing to worry about, or else move to another country.

I say, thank God for the Supreme Court. Because of it, we have only had one Civil War.

POSTED BY: DANIEL IN THE LION'S DEN | AUGUST 8, 2008 2:09 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Daniel

The Supreme Court has no need to "reach" for power, it is already in their grasp.

I too do not expect " the system changing any time soon."

There is no doubt Congress has abdicated its duty. The Constitution never stated that only courts will give meaning to the laws and the Constitution.

Nowadays that public opinion polls determine Congressional members' actions, it is very difficult for a member to feel secure enough to practice Constitutionalism.

POSTED BY: 4TH WATCH | AUGUST 7, 2008 7:18 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Mr. Elliot:

". . . anyone claiming to be a Christian but not going to church is self-deceived."

Really? Who made this rule? I couldn't find that ANYWHERE in the new testament..... Seriously, where did you get that? Was there a vote? A stone tablet? A burning bush?

Secondly: "The Christian religion is not only private. . ."

The Christian religion sir, is not a single institution or entity. It is a loose , non-centralized conglomeration of very diverse groups, individuals, doctrines, rituals and beliefs. There may be a common belief in J.C as the son of God (and some would argue that), but all else is up for grabs and frequent bitter debate. Your attempt to lump it all together as a focused, single-minded body of worshippers is absurd. Saying that 'the christian religion is ' or 'is not' anything is merely one man's opinion, not a definiton, commandment or a holy rule.

POSTED BY: POSSUM | AUGUST 7, 2008 5:32 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

4th Watch

The Supreme Court settles disputes when it is asked to do so. It does not "reach" for power, nor grasp for power, such as our Presidents do; it merely accepts, often reluctantly, questions, that have not been settled.

And it is the last resort. If we did not have a Supreme Court as an arbiter of last resort, what would recommend, war?

I think your complaint is a fundamental complaint with our system of government that has operated since about 1790. And I am fairly sure that they system is not changeing any time soon.

POSTED BY: DANIEL IN THE LION'S DEN | AUGUST 7, 2008 2:58 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Good Morning Mark

It began in 1803, Chief Justice John Marshall asserted a right of review of all laws enacted by Congress, he just reached out and took it. In other words the judiciary challenged the executive and legislative branches for power (turf war) and won it.

Today the Courts interpretation of the Constitution is accepted as law by the body politic and citizens as well. Nowhere in the Constitution is the Supreme Court given superiority.

The Courts claim to supremacy was rejected by these statesmen – Jefferson – Madison – Jackson – Lincoln – Teddy Roosevelt – FDR.

The morphing of our more than willing Congress has been a gradual one and continues on today. The Constitution intends Congress to be the first branch of Government, Congress doesn't want the accountability that comes with such power.

POSTED BY: 4TH WATCH | AUGUST 7, 2008 9:02 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Dear 4th -

Your point about Congress is taken and agreed to.

At which point did Congress' strength in numbers morph into being able to hide oneself in the crowd?

POSTED BY: MR MARK | AUGUST 7, 2008 12:15 AM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

Hello Mr. Mark

When you say

. In the USA, the PEOPLE decide upon who will run their government, and who will govern the govern. People who "look to the government...in such times" are actually looking to THEMSELVES to make the situation better by electing people who they believe will make a difference for the good.

I wish that were true.If Hamilton, Washington and other founding fathers could see how Congress has abdicated its powers to the courts heads would roll.

The intent of the Constitution is plain. Its first Article tells us Congress is to be the sole source of all laws, save clauses to the document itself. There are worthy people in Congress but the institution itself is has become a coward. They prefer to let the Federal courts (Supreme Court) make the decisions on issues that divide us so deeply.

Issues such as pornography, capital punishment, abortion, term limits on Congress, English as official language, gays right to marry. Congress acquiesces to the judiciary to prolong their careers period.

If we were nineteenth century Americans we could truthfully say the people rule. Not so today. Neither of us have ever elected a Federal judge or a justice to the Supreme Court. Yet their decisions are the law of the land, they rule over you and i. They are not elected, yet are appointed for life. This is not how America was established . We have a democratic society not a democratic government. This is Judicial dictate, " tyranny of the minority,"

POSTED BY: 4TH WATCH | AUGUST 6, 2008 11:30 PM
[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

4th watch writes:

"Where does one look to in such times. Its either God or the Govt."

Well:

1. god doesn't exist. No use looking there.
2. In the USA, the PEOPLE decide upon who will run their government, and who will govern the govern. People who "look to the government...in such times" are actually looking to THEMSELVES to make the situation better by electing people who they believe will make a difference for the good.

One would hope that "such times" demand people evaluate things based on fact, not fantasy; on reality, not religion.

POSTED BY: MR MARK | AUGUST 6, 2008 6:44 PM

Where does one look to in such times. Its either God or the Govt. Do you prefer Gods peace or a piece of the Govt. ? How does the silly unrealism of political campaigns, conventions and Govts. promises give hope to so many? It takes a voluntary self delusion to believe one political party; one man/woman can fulfill the problems facing the Nation, or the world, let alone the needs each of us as individuals have. Keep in mind that if all our necessities were to be met, we are probably infringing on someone's rights, what is - just - to me, is not for you and so on.

So to be realistic do we let go the hope that a human government will ever achieve Justice, Peace and Prosperity? Is there really Justice when our rights are ok and another's infringed? Is it really Peace as long as war is off our back and on to another's? Is there really Prosperity so long as our material needs are met and a neighbor struggles?

The Governments one size fits all response to most problems is restrain one, give to another. Where is the justice in that?

Bitter Brecht said it right

"Those who take meat from the table
Teach contentment
Those for whom the taxes are destined
Demand sacrifice
Those who eat their fill speak to the hungry
Of wonderful times to come
Those who lead the country into the abyss
Call ruling too difficult
For ordinary men."

Personally I believe the Way of Christ is the answer.
Nowadays though that belief is accused of stealing someone's peace and sense of justice, go figure that.

POSTED BY: 4TH WATCH | AUGUST 6, 2008 4:30 PM

The good Rev writes:

"Low-wage workers have hope because they have faith-trust and love."

Granted. The salient question is whether that hope is false.

POSTED BY: MR MARK | AUGUST 6, 2008 1:07 PM
The comments to this entry are closed.
