

The Cruel Calculus of Right Wing Christians

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In early 1997 this writer began a new and wonderful spiritual odyssey by accepting Christ and becoming an evangelical Christian. All of those who have experienced a personal relationship with God can attest to the healing nature of coming to live in light.

There is, though, a strange cognitive dissidence in Evangelical Christianity. While Scripture is clear about the Christian call to love, compassion, service, and obedience, many Christians act as if they simply discarded old laws for new laws. These "Right Wing" Christians are narrow, inflexible, judgmental, and overly concerned about other people's behavior meeting their own new laws. They have ignored the Scriptural command that tells Christians we live no longer by Law but by Grace.

These Right Wing Christians espouse a dogma that seems part Bible, a big chunk of Capitalism, and do as we say or we'll lock you up. Their philosophy is most clearly illustrated in their creation and support of the War on Drugs and their abandonment of the sick and disabled who do not follow their rules.

Far from being an obscure minority sect, these folks currently reside in the White House, sit on the Supreme Court, and lead the Department of Justice. They are hell bent (if you'll pardon the pun) on having the nation adopt all sorts of fanatic doctrine or face imprisonment, poverty, and ridicule. They have banned medical cannabis, imprisoned the sick, abandoned the environment, lavished attention on armaments, and erased the separation of Church and State.

"Compassionate Conservatism" seems to mean spying on your neighbor, informing on your family, slashing real budgets for medical care, and placing profits above all other values. Old people, the uninsured, and the disabled get third-rate medical care. Phony promises to help folks afford record high prices for pharmaceuticals have come to nothing, and if you grow your own you land in prison.

The cruel calculus of these "Compassionate Conservatives" seems to be that we should let the poor and working middle class simply die early thus saving Medicare and Social Security for the remaining rich. We don't have to worry about toxic wastes poisoning the environment because living in the "end times" we'll all be in Heaven soon anyway. To insure that these are indeed the end times, these Right Wing Christians have embarked on worldwide military adventures that are bound to end in worldwide holocaust.

Can these "Christians" really be calculating in such terms? Or do they really think much at all? That is the most frightening prospect. My Christianity demands self-

reflection and a constant examination of motives. This is time consuming and uncomfortable as all get out. Yet, I am reminded of my final examination in Philosophy while at college. We had to answer the question, "Assuming you are not now a son of a bitch, will you know if you become one?"

When this writer looks into the eyes of the sick, the poor, the prisoners, and the hopeless, I see the face of Jesus. I am commanded to care or risk my soul. Yet, we have "Christians" that don't seem to give a hoot. They have no time and no compassion for those they consider responsible for their own misfortune. They promise an even playing field to earn a piece of the American Dream so long as we play by their bigoted and undemocratic rules. God help those who don't win or get hurt while competing on this field. And God help those who don't live under the Law as espoused by these new American fanatics.

I pray for my Lord's return to this sick and hurting world. He'll know what to do with these Pharisees and publicans. In the meantime, I pray He touches their hearts and we come to live with true Grace, respect, and love.