
Subject: Re: Why did you vote for Obama?
Posted by [Spoony](#) on Thu, 11 Dec 2008 15:15:08 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

If a candidate's opinions on foreign policy or economics or law&order are fit subjects for debate, so are their opinions on religion. Until the day the religious stop trying to impose their own rules upon non-believers, claim unjustified religious privileges and interfere with non-believers' lives, this is a fit subject for criticism.

Still, the other thread is up and ready, just waiting for you to completely ignore everything I say, again. Here it is.

Jecht wrote on Wed, 10 December 2008 21:36Spoony, It's not on other people to ensure that I don't look at other women lustfully, it's completely on me. I don't expect others to change for my beliefs. It's my personal responsibility.
Better. Much better. Your religious rules only apply to believers.

Earlier, as an argument against secularism, you implied the opposite.

Jecht wrote on Wed, 10 December 2008 21:36Jesus(and it was new testament, not old by the way)

I am perfectly aware of that. If I said otherwise, and I do not think I did, please quote me and I will be happy to correct it.

Jecht wrote on Wed, 10 December 2008 21:36was simply making the point that a person should not covet another person's wife. A straying eye is painful to your wife, the other man, and most likely to the other woman. This is obviously a useful sermon, and I'm sure even you believe that looking at other women can hurt your significant other.

I would not disagree that your wife would have a legitimate grievance, but that is not the point. The point is the sermon claims that the two things are morally equivalent, which is insane. The Ten Commandments go along the same lines; the commandment against theft is preached with the same imperative as the commandment against possible desire of theft (which is a rather exaggerated description of envy). Odd, that, since the shortlist of 10 don't say anything about slavery or rape or cruelty to children. Still, why is theft the only commandment which must be backed up by another commandment saying you can't THINK about theft? Why not a commandment saying you can't THINK about murder or false witness? Why not a commandment saying you can't THINK about adultery? (Admittedly, Jesus takes care of the last one in the New Testament, but apparently thinking about murder is not worth prohibiting)

Jecht wrote on Wed, 10 December 2008 21:36On to the secular debate, the wording was irrelevant to the point I was trying to make. As you recall I was the first person to say secular. If you don't agree with this terminology then simply plug in a word of your choice to fit. Arguing semantics is too nit-picky for me to take seriously.

Yet my point still stands. You said secularism affects you in the same way as religion affects me, which only goes to show you don't know the meaning of the word. Secularism is freedom of religion and freedom from religion; it precisely means your religious beliefs do not affect me and mine do not affect you. It means let's agree to disagree and the town is big enough for the both of us. You said otherwise, and added the wild statement that we "should agree to disagree" when

you argue against that very concept.

Incidentally, there has never (to my knowledge) existed a truly secular society in the history of the world, and until there is, the concept of freedom of religion is an illusion.

Jecht wrote on Wed, 10 December 2008 21:36 Pastors are more learned than I am, or you are on this subject. They spend their lives researching the bible and corresponding texts to explain the basis behind God's teachings, Revelations, and interpretations of God's word. While I may even disagree with some theories and even make up my own, they still know the content much better than I. In fact, I've only read through the text approximately one and a half times. Pastors read through it hundreds of times. It's a Pastor's job to show support for these "ramblings" as you deemed them.

I fail to see why this makes them 'learned' any more than a child who's read See Spot Run a hundred times and consequently thinks it's all true and wants to live his life by it. Still, if you want to get a pastor in here to debate religion and secularism with me, I positively encourage it.

Jecht wrote on Wed, 10 December 2008 21:36 To sum up. I don't wish to impose my beliefs on anyone.

Very good. The world would be a much better place if all religious people thought the same. If that ever happened, I would not care whether your religion is factually correct or not, certainly not enough to challenge it.

Jecht wrote on Wed, 10 December 2008 21:36 I do however, want to make sure people don't get the wrong idea about my religion.

Who are you to say it is wrong? My "ideas" about religion come primarily from reading the Bible. Somewhat secondary to that is my observations of those who claim to follow it. Is the Bible wrong, then? It certainly contradicts itself often enough.

Jecht wrote on Wed, 10 December 2008 21:36 My church is filled with kind, loving, accepting people.

I would not dispute that, any more than I would dispute that there are plenty of Muslims who are not misogynistic, rabidly anti-Semitic, homophobic murderers. Unfortunately their religion specifically commands them to be.

I would also take issue with the word "accepting", bearing in mind that for the past two thousand years atheists like myself have been told that we will suffer horrifying and everlasting torture after we die, merely for not buying into your way of thinking. Even if this claim were anything truthful, if it were any more than an unknowable guess, it is still a long way away from "accepting".

The ranks of atheism are also filled with kind, loving people, just as your church probably is. There is a major difference between the two; atheists do not threaten you with ghastly punishments for thinking what you think.

Jecht wrote on Wed, 10 December 2008 21:36 While they may not agree with certain lifestyles (such as homosexuality), they would NEVER turn those people away from the congregation, charity, or prayer.

Likewise, I do not agree with Christianity, and yet I would not treat someone badly because of their religion. Unfortunately, the analogy is flawed. I would never support a law which meant that Christians have fewer rights under the law than non-Christians, never. Many Christians support

laws which mean homosexuals are legally second-class citizens. If not for Christianity, I am fairly certain these laws would have little trouble being democratically removed.

Jecht wrote on Wed, 10 December 2008 21:36 The church does many charitable programs such as premarital counseling, addiction counseling, helping those in need, and sending prayer to terminal patients of other local churches. Surely these things are not immoral and deplorable. Of course not, any more than Hezbollah and Hamas' charitable work towards Palestinians is deplorable. Unfortunately this does not invalidate the criticism of the other things they do.

There is one point, though - regarding prayer for patients. This has been known to have rather unpleasant consequences. A scientific experiment was done in the attempt to prove that prayer can have a positive effect on patients' recovery. I will admit that I laughed at the absurdity of this, but my chuckle didn't last long; it lasted right up until I read the results. The results were as follows:

- People who received prayers and didn't know it. There was no noticeable change, just as with people who didn't receive prayers.
 - People who received prayers and DID know it. They actually came out medically worse. We've known for a while about the effects morale can have on recovery. I can say that if I was in hospital and someone (a doctor or my parents or a priest) came in and told me that I was being prayed for, I would immediately feel more worried... is my condition that bad?
-