

Saturday, October 29, 2011

MOTHER TERESA IS WRONG: JESUS CAN NOT BE FOUND IN THE POOR

Again and again, I read or hear (as Mother Teresa is reported to have often said) that Jesus is in everyone and Christians are called to serve Him in them. This is usually said in reference to the Poor. The idea is based primarily on Matthew 25. This weekend it was used as the justification for the Church we attend to "Bless same-sex Marriages" (currently Clergy here are not allowed to perform same-gender weddings). The rationale behind the Resolution at the Annual Convention read, [this will enable us] "to seek Christ and to serve Christ in all persons". Sounds nice, but it is not true. Christ is not in all persons, whether they be poor, gay, rich or straight. I am re-posting the following study on Matthew 25. I first posted it February 12, 2008 on this Blog. Matthew 25:31 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. 32 Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. 34 Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, 36 I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' 37 Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? 38 And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? 39 And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' 40 And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.' This popular text is one of the most misunderstood and misused passages in the Bible. Mother Teresa and Ron Sider and a host of other Christians have it wrong. Here is how Ron Sider uses it-[Jesus] "warned his followers in the strongest possible words that those who do not feed the hungry, clothe the naked and visit prisoners will experience eternal damnation (Mat 25:31-46) - p.66 "Only as we feel the presence of [Jesus] in the form of a poor [man] can we understand his words: I was hungry and you gave me food ... (Mt 25:35-40) What does it mean to feed and clothe the Creator of all things? We can not know. We can only look at the poor ... with new eyes and resolve to heal their hurts and help end their oppression. Jesus saying (in Mat 25:45) is terrifying. "Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to the least of these, you did it not to me. What does that mean in a world where millions die each year while rich Christians live in affluence? What does it mean to see the Lord of the universe lying by the roadside starving and walk by on the other side. We cannot know. We can only pledge...not to kill him again."-p.69 Christ clearly taught that failure to feed the poor entails eternal damnation (Mt 25:45-46) -p.56 Jesus was even more blunt and sharp. To those who do not feed the hungry, clothe the naked and visit the prisoners, he will speak a terrifying word at the final Judgment: Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the Devil and his angels (Mt 25:41) The meaning is clear and unambiguous. Jesus intends that his disciples imitate his own special concern for the poor and needy. Those who disobey will experience eternal damnation. - p.82The above are all quotes from Ron Sider's book, Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger (1st edition, 1977) That Christians are to care for those who are really poor (as the Bible defines "poor") is absolutely true; but this common use of Matthew 25, illustrated by Sider, is in error! I have written about this before, but the topic continues to pop up, so I will address it again. My References: Matthew, Evangelist and Teacher by RT France, Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew by Craig Keener, Matthew, a Commentary by Robert Gundry and many other scholars Matt 25:31-46 is a passage that asks and answers the Question: Who shall be saved? The entire Bible makes it clear that salvation is entirely a matter of grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. Salvation is not based on our good works of any kind. The common interpretation of Matt 25:31-46 would lead us to believe that it is. Here is an overview of what the text does teach-1. There will be a Second Coming of Christ: the Son of Man is coming again in glory.v.31 Jesus said, 'When the Son of Man comes in his glory2. There is Judgment Day for all peoples. Jesus will be the Judge. When He comes in glory, all the billions of people who have ever lived on earth will be gathered before Him for His Judgment.v.31b then he will sit on the throne of his glory3. Jesus will divide the Peoples into two groups: Sheep and Goats.v.32 ... and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left.4. There is a Kingdom [Heaven]and there is a Hell. The latter is place of fire or punishment and that is eternal. Some go into the Kingdom and all others go to Hell. Which destiny is not determined by social activism or the lack thereof. The answer to the question: "What must I do to be saved" is not "Feed the Hungry"!v. 34 Then the king will say to those at his right hand, - [the Sheep] "Come, ... inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; v. 41 Then he will say to those at his left hand, "...depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; v. 46 And [the Goats people] will go away into eternal punishment, but the [Sheep people] into eternal life.'5. The Basis of Judgment is whether or not people love and serve Jesus Christ.v. 35 [to the Sheep:] for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me." ...v. 42 [to the Goats:] for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me

clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me."6. How can people show they love and want to serve Christ? God did not create or intend Hell for people, but for the Devil and his angels. People are sent there by Christ because they did not care for the "least of his brothers". People who did care for the least of his brothers are saved and go into Heaven. By doing this they demonstrate that they love the Lord! v.40- "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me." v. 45 "Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me."7. The crucial Question: who are "the least of these brothers of Jesus"? Are they the hungry, sick and homeless we might find on the streets of our cities? Are they all the people defined by our Government as the Poor? Is caring for them the way to our salvation? Will we go to Hell if we do not care for them? The "least brothers of Jesus" are Believers, particularly the Apostles and other disciples spreading the Gospel and suffering because of that. We learn this by considering how the relevant phrases from our passage are used in other places by Matthew. Matthew 18:6 But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. 14 In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost. Cf Lk 17:2, Mk 9:42 Matthew 10:42 And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward. cf Mk 9:41 I tell you the truth, anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to Christ will certainly not lose his reward. cf Luke 8: 21 He replied, "My mother and brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practice." cf Mk 3:33, Matt 12:48 Matthew 25:40 "The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.' cf 28:10 Cf Mk 9:42, John 20:17 Matthew 18:3 And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. 4 Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven 5 And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me. 6 But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. 10 See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. The hungry and naked (etc) in Matthew 25 are not the millions of people starving in Africa or anywhere else. First, Jesus Christ is not incarnate in the world's Poor. The Spirit of Christ indwells those (and only those) who have been justified by faith. Second, no one is related to Jesus, a brother or other member of his family, based on social-economic status. The brothers of Jesus are those who have been adopted by the Father on the basis that they are in union with His Son by their saving faith (Gal.3:26-4:7). They are those (only) who obey God's Word - not the millions who do not do that, rich or poor. The Brothers of Jesus who obey the great Commission often had to suffer great deprivation, hardship and imprisonment. Jesus warned the Apostles of that very thing. And of course, the experience of the Apostle Paul demonstrates it. This Passage (Matthew 25) is to encourage people to help such Brothers in their need. Many examples are found in Acts. Heb 10:32 Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you stood your ground in a great contest in the face of suffering. 33 Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated. 34 You sympathized with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions. Those who refuse to help Brothers in need reveal that they are against Christ and the Gospel about Him. That being the case, they perish in Hell. cf 2 Thes 1:8, 2:10b, 1 Peter 4:1 Jesus had said, "He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me. 41 Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward. -Matthew 10:40 cf 18:5 It is interesting that neither Sheep nor Goats knew that they were serving Jesus when they helped the Apostles or, on the other hand, were not serving Him when they refused to help the Apostles or other Christian workers. But they were. John 13:20 I tell you the truth, whoever accepts anyone I send accepts me; and whoever accepts me accepts the one who sent me." Luke 10:16 "He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me." cf Acts 9:1 and 4-5 When Saul persecuted the Church, he did not realize that he was persecuting Christ. That Jesus loves the poor (and the rich) is true. That Christians should love the poor (and the rich) is also true. However, it is error to identify Jesus with the Poor of the world. They are not His Body. Jesus does not indwell the Poor of the world; He definitely does indwell His Church. That is His Body. That we should make caring for suffering brothers and sisters in Christ, His Body, particularly those members who are suffering because they are working to spread the Gospel is the third major point of this text. That we serve Christ when we do this is the second point. That those who serve Christ go to Heaven is the first point of Matthew 25:31-46

Posted by Cal in Bible Topics at 15:09

OIL, THE MIDDLE CLASS AND JESUS

A major concern of mine is that many Christians (as well as many others) do not appreciate how complex social issues are (political, economic, historical, religious, scientific, etc). Most people seem to prefer quick or simple bumper sticker slogans like the Occupy Wall St crowd uses. Christians who simply want to share the love of God with everyone as the answer to everything are seriously out of touch with reality and the way the world works.

Here are two articles that explore the oil and energy problems

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/daniel-yergin-for-the-future-of-oil->

Blog Export: DUTCH TREAT- Cal Fox's Blog, <http://www.calvinfox.com/blog/>

http://oilandglory.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2011/01/24/daniel_yergins_much_awaited_sequel

Here are two articles that explore the economy, particularly the economic troubles of the Middle Class

<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2011/09/can-the-middle-class-be-saved>

<http://moneyland.time.com/2011/09/08/the-sad-sorry-state-of-the-middle-class/>

Christians who want to "make a difference" in the real world need to do their home work and seriously consider where and how their Faith can intersect with the real world issues mentioned in articles like these.

Posted by Cal in Christian Living at 14:07

Tuesday, October 25. 2011

THE MIDDLE EAST MESS

The withdrawal of American Troops from Iraq with the chaos in Egypt and Libya, the violent crushing of protestors in Syria and Turkey's attack on the Kurdistan is far from good. It leaves the Middle East in a dangerous mess and Israel in trouble. The probable winner is Israel's sworn enemy- Iran. Here is a good overview of the situation- <http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/20111024-libya-and-iraq-price-success?>

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 17:48

Monday, October 24. 2011

THE GROWING CHURCH IN CHINA- BIGGER THAN IN EUROPE

Many in the West are aware of the church in China – both above and under ground; projections of its size vary widely, but there is little doubt it is immense – a conservative figure is 60 million. There are already more Chinese at a Christian church on Sunday than in the whole of Europe. One of the great questions of our day is what faith will lead China once Marxism falls. Will it be authoritarianism, a national socialism, a type of Buddhism, or the powerful surfacing of the underground Christian church?

Read the full article here. Check out the references
<http://www.churchandculture.org/blog.asp?id=1866>

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 15:56

WHERE THE WEALTHY LIVE IN AMERICA

In a post below, I asked if you were a pastor in one of the poorest Cities in America what would you lead your church to do there. Here is a list of some of the wealthiest Cities. If you were a Pastor in one of these places what would you lead your church to do?

<http://www.forbes.com/2005/10/27/richest-cities->
<http://www.businessweek.com/lifestyle/>

Posted by Cal in Social Issues at 15:26

WAGING A JUST PEACE

The argument for keeping Military troops in Iraq is not to wage War against Al Qaeda, but to preserve peace there against Iran's intrusion (as well as help stabilize the entire region, including the well being of Israel)
[general-calls-iraq-pullout-plan-a-disaster/](http://www.businessweek.com/lifestyle/)

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 15:13

ARGUMENT FOR WITHDRAWING OUR TROOPS FROM IRAQ

This is a good time to review the Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Since the 5th Century, Christians have used "Just War" Theory to evaluate any war. I wrote about this in 2007 and again almost a year ago. As to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the aggressors are neither Nation. Since 9-11, the enemy has been Al Qaeda and its sometime partner, the Taliban (These are different organizations with different goals.) They were at "home" in both these Countries, but are now primarily operating out of (and often with the support or complicity of) Pakistan. Just War Doctrine says for a war to be just, there must be at least these 3 criteria simultaneously: *damage inflicted by the aggressor on the nation or community of nations must be lasting, grave, and certain; YES, although both are now using subversive Terrorist attacks rather than traditional military forces *all other means of putting an end to it must have been shown to be impractical or ineffective; YES & NO- both Al Qaeda and Taliban are now using subversive Terrorist attacks to accomplish their respective rather than traditional military forces and the latter sent by NATO countries are the ones proving impractical or ineffective. However, many overt attacks have been covertly prevented apart from normal Military maneuvers and non-traditional methods by Allied Forces are being successful (such as the use of drones) against both Al Qaeda and Taliban. Just War Theory assumes normal military operations between Nations using traditional military methods. *there must be serious prospects of success Debatable and doubtful. There has been some success using non-traditional methods, but after 10 years, both the Taliban and Al Qaeda are still operational *the use of arms must not produce evils and disorders graver than the evil to be eliminated Debatable in the long run The defeat of his armies and the cruel tyranny of Saddam Hussein was a very different situation. That war against him and his military was Just, given what we knew at the time. However, the "War" in Iraq now is primarily about forging a new Government and helping its Leaders to build a "new" Nation Those goals as such do not meet the criteria for a Just War and need their own justification. Absent that (which really is a matter of politics), the War in Iraq and probably Afghanistan, should be ended. Taliban does not seem to be interested in anything but dominating in any area except the one in which they are located now. The non-military battle against Al Qaeda and Jihadist Terrorism around the world must go on. Good has

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been accomplished by our Military efforts. Soldiers and their families did not suffer and sacrifice in Iraq in vain. Whatever happens there in the future will not take their past accomplishment there away.

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 09:29

Sunday, October 23. 2011

CITIES WITH HIGHEST POVERTY RATES IN AMERICA

If you were a Pastor in any of these Cities what would you lead your church to do?
[reading-pa-tops-list-poverty-list-census-shows.html?pagewanted=all](#)
[most-impooverished-cities-business-beltway-poverty-cities_slide_5.html](#)

Posted by Cal in Social Issues at 20:31

REASONS WHY TROOP WITHDRAWAL NOT GOOD IDEA

Sen. Lieberman's Blistering Critique of President Obama's Decision to Withdraw From Iraq
<http://www.courant.com/news/politics/hc-sen-lieberman>

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 19:57

OBAMA WANTED TROOPS TO STAY- IRAQ REFUSED! really?

BAGHDAD (AP) — Iraq's prime minister said Saturday that U.S. troops are leaving Iraq after nearly nine years of war because Baghdad rejected American demands that any U.S. military forces to stay would have to be shielded from prosecution or lawsuits. The comments by Nouri al-Maliki, a Shiite, made clear that it was Iraq who refused to let the U.S. military remain under the Americans' terms. A day earlier, President Barack Obama had hailed the troops' withdrawal as the result of his commitment — promised shortly after taking office in 2009 — to end the war that he once described as “dumb.” “When the Americans asked for immunity, the Iraqi side answered that it was not possible,” al-Maliki told reporters in Baghdad. “The discussions over the number of trainers and the place of training stopped. Now that the issue of immunity was decided and that no immunity to be given, the withdrawal has started.” But continued violence across Iraq, coupled with growing influence by the Shiite power Iran over the government in Baghdad, prompted the Obama administration earlier this year to push to keep thousands of U.S. troops here for years to come.
[iraq-pm-immunity-issue-scuttled-us-troop-deal/](#)

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 19:45

DON'T BLAME GOD!

When tragedy and disaster strikes someone (many) always blames God or asks where He was when it happened and why didn't He prevent it. The truth is that many disasters, like the devastation from current floods in Thailand or the unemployment and economic and social collapse of entire Cities and Counties in the US (to say nothing of the same in Europe) are caused by the poor judgement and behavior of human being and could have been prevented by the same people. God is not accountable or to be blamed in any case for such events or their consequences. Here are stories in the news today that offer ample evidence for this conclusion-
[poor-planning-dooms-bangkok-businesses-in-floods/](#)
[desperate-us-cities-counties-file-bankruptcy](#)

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 19:33

Friday, October 21. 2011

AMPERSANDS ANYONE?

Here are 365 creative ways of looking at the same thing. Isn't imagination wonderful? If you are a conservative who does not like variation and change & believe your way is the only way, this will give you serious reason for pause and humbleness-

<http://ampersandampersand.tumblr.com/archive>

Posted by Cal in Christian Living at 19:11

FIGHTING LIBERALISM AT HARVARD

There is no doubt about it. America began as a Christian Country. From the founding of the Plimouth, Massachusetts Colony in 1620 and, soon after, the settlement of the nearby Boston area for the first 120 years, the Protestant Faith (Calvinism) of the Pilgrims and Puritans was dominant everywhere. Harvard University was founded in 1636 primarily to educate young men to become Pastors.

"Yale University was founded on October 16, 1701, by Congregationalist ministers unhappy with the growing liberalism at Harvard. The first classes were held in the residence of Rev. Abraham Pierson. Not until 1745 was the school moved to New Haven and renamed Yale in honor of Elihu Yale, a successful merchant who made a donation of goods valued at \$2,800. The purpose of the renamed school was "To plant and under ye Divine blessing to propagate in this Wilderness, the blessed Reformed, Protestant Religion, in ye purity of its Order and Worship."<http://www.christianity.com/ChurchHistory/11630185>"The blessed Reformed, Protestant Religion", of course, was Calvinism; but by 1700 its influence was on the decline to be replaced by Deism and Unitarianism [Liberalism] in New England.

Posted by Cal in Theological Issues at 12:07

CHRISTIAN MANGA

Have you heard of Japanese Manga? It is not a food. It is a kind of comic book or graphic novel. I am not recommending them to you. But reading the posts at the attached link, I found very interesting and helpful. The Blogger is trying to develop Christian Manga. He brings up all the major Themes that Missionaries and Missional Christians are concerned about- a lot of cross-cultural issues and the challenges of contextualizing the Gospel. What he says about trying to integrate the manga style and Christian Faith and Morals applies to those who are trying to do the same with all the Arts. Since this is a subject most of us (certainly me) are not familiar with, his discussion brings new perspectives to all of these matters.

<http://dizzcity.com/>

Posted by Cal in Christian Living at 11:34

Thursday, October 20, 2011

ENGLISH ONLY

It seems to me that essential for our Nation to be One is that we at least all speak the same language and that would be ENGLISH. In fact, requirements for voting in Federal Elections include citizenship. And the requirements for becoming a naturalized Citizen of the US include "The ability to read, write and speak ordinary English unless they are physically unable to do so due to a disability such as being blind or deaf, or suffer from a developmental disability or mental impairment. Those over 50 years old on the date of filing who have lived here for a total of at least 20 years after admission as a permanent resident and those who are over 55 and have been legal permanent residents for at least 15 years are also exempt from this requirement. AND ALSO A basic understanding the fundamentals of U.S. history and government. AND ... an affinity for the principles of the U.S. Constitution." It seems like all that, too, should require classes in English. So my Question is why "the federal government is ordering that 248 counties and other political jurisdictions provide bilingual ballots to Hispanics and other minorities who speak little or no English. In all, more than 1 in 18 jurisdictions must now provide foreign-language assistance in pre-election publicity, voter registration, early voting and absentee applications as well as Election Day balloting.

http://www.newsvine.com/_news/2011/10/12/8287231-bilingual-voting-ballots-ordered-in-25-states

Posted by Cal in Social Issues at 18:41

FOLLOWING THE MONEY TRAIL

Progressive and left-leaning Democrats, a major part of Mr Obama's core support group, are being energized, to his delight, by the "Occupy _____" Protestors. And who are in the top tier of the Occupy_____ " Protestors' targets? Wall St Stock brokers and alleged greedy Big Banks. From whom is Mr Obama getting a large portion of money to finance his re-election Campaign? "Despite frosty relations with the titans of Wall Street, President Obama has still managed to raise far more money this year from the financial and banking sector than Mitt Romney or any other Republican presidential candidate, according to new fundraising data. Obama has brought in more money from employees of banks, hedge funds and other financial service companies than all the other GOP candidates combined ..."

Read the article [obama-has-more-cash-from-financial-sector-than-gop-hopefuls-combined-](#)

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 18:16

Tuesday, October 18. 2011

SAN FRANCISCO IS GOING TO THE DOGS

This development is so wrong on a number of levels.-"SAN FRANCISCO -- There are more dogs than kids in the City by the Bay. So it stands to reason dog owners carry a lot of clout - so much so they believe their endorsement can sway the upcoming mayoral race."We expect the dog vote to be a game-changer," said Bruce Wolfe, president of DogPAC, which held a forum attended by several mayoral hopefuls Saturday. There are an estimated 150,000 dogs in the city, compared with some 108,000 children, according to the San Francisco Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the 2010 U.S. Census. More than 800,000 people are sandwiched into 7-by-7 square miles in the city named for St. Francis, patron saint of animals. As more parents seeking new schools and lower housing costs move out of the city, more straight and gay couples, as well as aging baby boomers, are choosing canines over kids. San Francisco is renowned for its dog parks and, like Paris, many of its restaurants and shops welcome pampered pooches in their leopard-print sweaters and bling-ringed dog collars. "Making San Francisco a family friendly city means recognizing the multitude of ways in which we define families," City Attorney Dennis Herrera says on his site. "And in the city of St. Francis, that includes dogs and companion animals." Read full article here- http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/10/03/dogpac-san-francisco_n_992555.html#s385030

Posted by Cal in Social Issues at 09:37

Monday, October 17. 2011

THE WORLD DOES NOT OWE ANYONE A LIVING

The Fourth Commandment is "Thou shalt work" (Exodus 20:9) and The New Testament says (2 Thes 3:10 ... If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat. 11 For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies. 12 Now such persons we command to ...work and to earn their own living. But, the world does not owe anyone a job! They are out there. We hear a lot about the 9% who are unemployed, but that means 91% of the American workforce have jobs. The challenge is to find one, granted not always easy, and to do what is required to be employable. But the Federal Government does not owe anyone a job, food, clothing, housing and healthcare or even education. Where does the Dogma that it does come from? Multitudes seem to fervently believe it. Why? Why do masses of people, mostly young, become indignant when they are not given these things and stridently demand them as though they were their unalienable rights- entitlements- simply for being alive in America? Why? Certainly people of Biblical faith should not believe this false Dogma! When we pray, "Father God, give us this day our daily Bread", we are not looking to Him for a handout. We are praying for the ability and the opportunity to earn the necessities of life- and thanking Him for that daily.

Posted by Cal in Christian Living at 20:30

A JOBS BILL THAT WON'T DO THE JOB

Prior to the dedication of the MLK Jr Memorial in DC, Al Sharpton led a nearby Rally of 1000s to demand that Congress regroup and pass Mr Obama's Job Bill (which had recently been defeated). Sharpton and others said the Bill was necessary for jobs and justice for suffering unemployed Americans and something MLK Jr would have wanted. Here is a good critique answering why Congress was right in defeating the Bill and why it would not lead to jobs or help solve the unemployment problem.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-10-14/what-do-you-call-a-jobs-bill-minus-the-jobs->

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 20:19

BEWARE SHOPPING IN THE MARKET

Here is an interesting article from a Wall St Journal Columnist that slams Wall St, ie- money managers, especially hedge-fund managers and professional Market Analysts for how, he says, they are ripping off stock holders- all people who sink their money (capital) into stocks and bonds under their direction. He lists 5 groups that he feels could join current OWS protests.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/>

There is a Proverb, "A fool and his money are soon parted". It is not in the Bible, but still seems to be true. Another one says, "Buyer beware!"

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 19:45

Saturday, October 15, 2011

THE HEART OF WHAT'S WRONG ABOUT WALLSTREET

With all the protests in the air today against greedy capitalists and Wall Street, let us make this very clear: It is Biblical to work, invest and to make profits- the more the better! In fact, God expects it (as I have written many times! See my articles about Economics here

http://www.reformedliving.org/index.php?option=com_sectionex&view

The issue is what we do with money that is made. We should add property and all other assets to our income (from all sources) and talk about our Wealth. The issue is how we use our Wealth. Off the top, we will give a portion of it to the State and Federal Government. (See the post below) This also is Biblical. We should give at least 10% to support our Churches and help the Poor among us. This, too, is Biblical. What about the rest? It is for Ministry and Stewardship (fulfillment of the God-given Cultural Mandate (Gen 1-2)

The Occupy Wall St Protestors are angry about greed and waste and exploitation and fraud and dishonesty are wrong. Christians of all kinds can agree that such behavior is wrong and immoral and unethical as well as illegal. And we must insist that greed, waste, exploitation, fraud and dishonesty are wrong and must be protested when committed by the Poor and Middle Class as well as by the so-called Power Elite and Wall Street and the Protestors themselves. All have sinned and fallen short, not just a few! We must also insist that the fundamental solution to such immoral and unethical behavior by anyone, rich, poor or in-between, is the regeneration of people's hearts because that is where all this sinful behavior originates. Jesus said that! Mark 7:21 from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, 22 coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. 23 All these evil things come from within...Such regeneration is possible, but only by the grace of God working through the Gospel about Jesus Christ. The Government can not make that happen, but Christians can! We can make the regeneration of millions possible by effective saturation evangelism. The action of the angry protestors is a call to such action by all of us who know this Truth!

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 11:47

FACTS ABOUT WHO PAYS TAXES AND HOW MUCH

Obama's new strategy: Don't whine, blame. Attack. Indict. Accuse. Who? The rich — and their Republican protectors — for wrecking America. In Obama's telling, it's the refusal of the rich to "pay their fair share" that jeopardizes Medicare. If millionaires don't pony up, schools will crumble. Oil-drilling tax breaks are costing teachers their jobs. Corporate loopholes will gut medical research. It's crude. It's Manichaeian. And the left loves it. As a matter of math and logic, however, it's ridiculous. Obama's most coveted tax hike — an extra 3 to 4.6 percent for millionaires and billionaires (weirdly defined as individuals making more than \$200,000) — would have reduced last year's deficit (at the very most) from \$1.29 trillion to \$1.21 trillion. Nearly a rounding error. The oil-drilling breaks cover less than half a day's federal spending. You could collect Obama's favorite tax loophole — depreciation for corporate jets — for 100 years and it wouldn't cover one month of Medicare, whose insolvency is a function of increased longevity, expensive new technology and wasteful defensive medicine caused by an insane malpractice system. [emphasis added] After three years, Obama's self-proclaimed transformative social policies have yielded a desperately weak economy. What to do? Take the low road: Plutocrats are bleeding the country, and I shall rescue you from them. Problem is, this kind of populist demagoguery is more than intellectually dishonest. It's dangerous. Obama is opening a Pandora's box. Popular resentment, easily stoked, is less easily controlled, especially when the basest of instincts are granted legitimacy by the nation's leader.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-scapegoat-strategy/2011/10> Figures from Factcheck.org The nonpartisan CBO keeps track of such things and published its most recent tables in December 2007. The information to answer this question is in "Summary Table 2: Shares of Federal Tax Liabilities, 2004 and 2005." The top 1 percent in 2005 were those households with income of at least \$307,500, and they got 18.1 percent of all "comprehensive" income, which includes all cash income plus the cash value of such benefits as Medicare and food stamps. CBO calculates that the top 1 percent paid 27.6 percent of all federal taxes, including: 38.8 percent of federal individual income taxes 4.0 percent of federal social insurance taxes (Social Security and Medicare) 58.6 percent of corporate income taxes (indirectly, through stock ownership) 5.5 percent of federal excise taxes (on such things as gasoline, tobacco, alcoholic beverages and telephones.) <http://www.factcheck.org/2008/05/top-1-what-they-make-and-pay/>

Figures from Kiplinger-The latest numbers from the IRS -- based on 2009 tax returns -- show what it takes to be among the top 1% of income earners: adjusted gross income of \$343,927 or more. The 1.4 million Americans with this elite status reported 16.9% of all the country's taxable income. That's right. One percent of taxpayers reported almost 17% of

all taxable income. But that same tiny group also kicked in 37% of all the taxes paid. How much do you need to make to be in the top 50% of earners? Just \$32,396. Fall below that level and you are in the bottom half, along with nearly 70 million of your fellow taxpayers. All told, that group earned just 13% of the income reported on 2009 tax returns. And they coughed up 2.25% of all the income taxes paid. (Note that these figures include only federal income taxes. According to one study, more than half of all wage earners pay more in Social Security and Medicare taxes than they do income tax. The percentage of those paying more payroll tax than income tax soars to nearly 90% if you count both the employer and employee share of those levies.) For historical perspective, back in 1986, the top 1% of earners reported 11% of all income and paid 26% of the income taxes; the lower-earning 50% made 17% of the income and paid 6% of the nation's individual income tax bill.
<http://www.kiplinger.com/features/archives/how-your-income-stacks-up.html>

Posted by Cal in Social Issues at 11:40

READING WORDS ENGRAVED ON WASHINGTON MONUMENTS

Inspiring and wonderful words are engraved in the walls of buildings all around Washington D.C. High-sounding ideals are engraved on the new memorial to Martin Luther King Jr, as well as on the older ones dedicated to Presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt, Ronald Reagan, Woodrow Wilson, Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Jefferson as well as on memorials to veterans of our various wars. They include words that every American can wholehearted agree to, words such as Justice, Equality, Brotherhood, Peace, Freedom, Honor. The same Ideals are engraved on the walls of the Library of Congress and the Congressional Building and Supreme Court Building and many others. These are words, Ideals, we all believe in. They speak of Principles that unite us, words for which we stand together as a People. Then why are we so divided as a Nation? Because we do not agree on what these words, these Ideals, these Principles actually mean in practice. More than that, we do not agree on how to achieve and preserve these Ideals, particularly the role of the Federal Government in doing that. Behind these wonderful words and concepts that appear to unite us, are divisions caused by often opposing beliefs and dogmas about how to apply and live by these words as a Nation. This is tragic but true. It is Reality. How did we become the Disunited State of America? First, we the People have departed from the Biblical, Reformation (Calvinist) Faith of the first Colonists, the Puritans, which was dominant in this Land for more than 125 years before the Revolution of 1776. . That original dominant Faith has long been replaced by another dominant one known as Civil Religion or the Religion of the Republic which has Christian trappings and symbols, but is not Christian. Second, we have departed from the original meaning of the words, principles and intent of the Founding Documents of the United States and their Framers. Those founding words have, over the years, been endued with ever new and progressive meanings in keeping with the changing values and mores of American Society. (There are many reasons why this happens.) The result is that all Americans can read the Ideals engraved on all those memorial walls with open and nodding approval, but secretly with different, often conflicting, understanding of them. On special occasions when those words and Ideals are invoked, we appear to be united. In reality, we are far from it. Reading the words on these memorials, as I did last week, I am inspired by the ideals they represent and impressed and thankful that they have been spoken and embraced by so many of our Leaders, but the reality troubles me. What must be done to remedy this situation? The solution seems obvious and I am motivated to work harder to do what I can to achieve it by the grace of God and to His Glory.

Posted by Cal in Personal Journal at 00:14

Friday, October 14. 2011

3 UNUSUAL FILMS TELLING STORIES OF INJUSTICE IN AMERICA

Are you interested in your constitutional legal rights? We recently watched a movie and a documentary about Mary Surratt, the first woman executed for murder in America by the United States Government. She was hanged because she was found guilty of aiding John Wilkes Booth et al in the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. There was only the testimony of two very unreliable "witnesses" and weak circumstantial evidence of her involvement and her conviction was definitely not beyond reasonable doubt. The major issue for debate however, was that she, a private citizen, was railroaded through the trial by a Military Commission to an outcome predetermined by the Administration of the time. They were set on revenge and not justice and to put the War behind them at all costs. Ms Surratt was a Confederate sympathizer, as were most people in Baltimore at the time. Can our Government run roughshod over the civil rights of a citizen in the time of war and for the common good of the Nation if it sees fit to do so?

She was denied her constitutional rights to a writ of habeas corpus, due process and a trial by a jury of her peers. She was also not treated very well as prisoner or as a woman. Even her execution itself was bungled. This disturbing story is portrayed by Robert Redford's movie, *Conspirator* and in the documentary, *The Killing of Mary Surratt* by Chris King.

Also-Do you like baseball stories? War stories? Stories about injustice and the violation of citizens' rights? Stories about Racism, prejudice and just plain ignorance? Then you should check out the movie called, *The American Pastime*. It is about the forced internment in concentration camps during WWII of maybe 10,000 American citizens of Japanese descent. This film is based on the true experience of some of them in one camp and their redemption through baseball and enlistment in the Army to fight the War. The movie is upsetting, enlightening as well as entertaining. The tragedy documented is disgraceful and a black eye on American history. These films have great lessons to be learned by Americans today and certainly could lead to meaningful discussions at home and in school.

Posted by Cal in Social Issues at 17:00

WHEN WASHINGTON D.C. WAS BURNED TO THE GROUND

Our visits to the Washington D.C- Baltimore area are always filled with fascinating discoveries and experiences, thanks to the interests and hospitality of our daughter and her family who live there. They are a Navy Family, our son-in-law being retired after his 20 year career (but still involved in national security), a grandson who has served and another who is a midshipman now preparing to serve our Country in the Military. Our patriotism is always stirred up during these visits big time! Our daughter knows and enjoys both DC and Baltimore very well and we always visit historical places, National Memorial sites, museums and buildings of importance to functions of our Government. I really wish every American would do all that! We have been several times to Fort McHenry in Baltimore, which recently opened a new visitors' center, and have become familiar with the War of 1812-15 when British armies and ships invaded our Nation from the Great Lakes to Louisiana, burning down our Capital, but being defeated in the 26 hour battle in Baltimore centered around the Fort. Watching the very well-done video of the Battle, ending with the display of our Flag that was still there in dawn's early light and listening to the (now) National Anthem sung by the Naval Academy Chorus really moves the heart and brings tears to the eyes, a lump to the throat and great thanksgiving for the mercies and blessing of God on our Country and a strong appreciation for those who have gone before us to fight for and preserve this Land of the Free!

Posted by Cal in Personal Journal at 11:04

NEW QT Thots DEVOTIONAL AVAILABLE

The latest Issue of my Devotional Writing, "Cal's Call", is now available at

http://kudospress.com/serendipity/index.php?/library/Cals_Call_October2011.html

Posted by Cal in Christian Living at 09:27

Thursday, October 13, 2011

THE NOT SO RADICAL OCCUPY WALL ST MOVEMENT

When we were in DC last week we observed a parade and demonstration by local members of the Occupy Wall St Movement. Here is one description by a sympathizer [note: the parade came later] http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/dcs-occupy-protest-attracting-only-the-usual-suspects/2011/10/11/gIQAVgYPdL_story.html Here is a more helpful critique by David Brooks of the OWSM which offers ideas that are far more radical than the demonstrators offer-

"The U.S. economy is probably going to stink for a few more years. It is beset by short-term problems (low consumer demand, uncertain housing prices, too much debt) and long-term problems (wage stagnation, rising health care costs, eroding human capital).""Realistically, not much is going to be done to address the short-term problems, but we can at least use this [time] to address the country's underlying structural ones. Do tax reform, fiscal reform, education reform and political reform so that when the economy finally does recover the prosperity is deep, broad and strong." "Unfortunately... Nothing of consequence has been achieved over the past two years. Instead, there have been a series of trivial sideshows. It's as if people can't keep their minds focused on the big things. They get diverted by scuffles that are small, contentious and symbolic. Take the Occupy Wall Street movement." http://www.taiwannews.com.tw/etn/news_content.php?id=1734573

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 14:23

DOES IT REALLY MATTER THAT ROMNEY IS A MORMON?

"People who say personal conviction, or religious faith, is irrelevant to a presidential candidate are being politically and intellectual naïve. Yes, vote for president on the basis of your estimation of their ability to govern, but don't be misled that religious conviction is irrelevant to the decision-making process inherent within governance." Read full article and the related sources here- <http://www.churchandculture.org/blog.asp?id=1816>

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 14:18

THE SCANDAL OF THE RED SOX

"There are worse things than having your baseball team blow a nine-game lead in September. One is having a team that's a disgrace, one you can't stand. That's where the Red Sox are today. "This is a scandal, no way around it, and the saddest part is the damage inflicted on the reputations of so many supposed heroes. The lazy, beer-drinking pitchers were named by Hohler to include cancer survivor Jon Lester and former team leader Josh Beckett, along with the villainous John Lackey. Tim Wakefield, arguably the most beloved Red Soxer of all, stands accused of becoming too wrapped up in his own quest for a 200th victory. You don't believe it?..." Read the full article by our favorite local sports writer- http://www.masslive.com/redsox/index.ssf/2011/10/the_red_sox_are_not_just_a_dys.html "There are so many things wrong with the Sox at this hour, it's difficult to know where to start. The manager is gone, the general manager is gone, the owners are in hiding, and the players are a loathsome lot totally unworthy of the money and adulation they receive." <http://www.bostonglobe.com/sports/2011/10/13/>

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 14:14

IS THIS MODEL OF PUBLIC EDUCATION GOOD FOR U.S.?

"Finland rightly deserves attention today as a nation that treats its children as a precious resource and that honors the adults who make education their passion and their career. Someday, I hope, we will recognize the failure of the behaviorist approach now in vogue; someday we will see that our current "reforms" are appropriate for the industrial era of the early 20th century, not for the needs of the 21st century. When that day arrives, we will understand the deep wisdom of Finland, with its love for children and its respect for educators, and we will be grateful that there is a successful alternative to our own failed model." Read the full article -[why-finlands-schools-are-great-by-doing-what-we-dont/](#)

Blog Export: DUTCH TREAT- Cal Fox's Blog, <http://www.calvinfox.com/blog/>

Posted by Cal in Social Issues at 14:09

Tuesday, October 4, 2011

ARGUMENT FOR THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE

The Fundamental Baptist churches I was familiar with in my younger days all used the Scofield Bible and its system of notes that taught Dispensationalism. An important prophecy was that Europe would one day become a United Nation under the Anti-Christ. Here is a fascinating article that presents the case for that United Europe (without mentioning who will run it.) It does not exist politically now. The argument uses the same reasons that thankfully prevailed for creating the United States of America after the Revolutionary War.

<http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/20110627-divided-states-europe>

Posted by Cal in Current Events at 15:46

DEFENDING PUBLIC SCHOOLS

In this article , the writer lists reasons why America must have public schools.

[why-public-education-must-be-preserved](#)

But if public schools are so important, the question is begged about who controls those schools, how they are administered, what is taught, how it is taught and who does the teaching. And that begs the question about who teaches the Teachers. It also begs the question about the role parents must play, what will be required of students and how the local community will be involved. And like it or not, all the social conditions that hinder public education must be addressed. Finally, how will Bible believing Christians be involved in all this?

Posted by Cal in Social Issues at 15:35

Saturday, October 1, 2011

DISCOVERING COLUMBUS AND CELEBRATING HIS DAY & El Dia de la Raza,

When we lived on the Canadian Border we often had occasion to cross into Quebec, where the predominant language is French. We were in a "foreign" country, only minutes from our house in Vermont. When we have occasion to go anywhere in Springfield, only minutes from our house here in Massachusetts, we often have the same feeling of being in a foreign country because we will be surrounded by people speaking Spanish. I expect the Quebecois to speak French. I expect people in New England to speak English, but that is often not the case in many local neighborhoods, stores, restaurants, schools, medical facilities and all kinds of public events. That is the demographic reality I must accept. But I have not gotten used to feeling like a foreigner in an area I have lived in most of my 73 years, speaking in English, and I honestly do not want to! The United States is now in the middle of Hispanic Heritage Month (9-15/10-15) On October 12, when Americans traditionally observe Christopher Columbus Day, our Hispanic neighbors will celebrate El Dia de la Raza, The Day of our Race (Identity). To quote an article in a local church newsletter we receive (in English) "for the indigenous peoples of the Americas, the arrival of Columbus was the end of their cultures as they had existed before. However, for the Latino community [Dia de la Raza] is the celebration of what resulted- a new culture and identity based on a blend of European, Indigenous and African influences that give us the Latino culture that exists today- a gift to our world". I knew "Columbus Day" has been very controversial for many in recent years- not for me, but for certain multicultural activists in the area. I decided to review the History. Fascinating, but to say "controversial" is great understatement, and very confusing. Whom does one believe? As usual, bias and prejudice is in almost every account of the story. Some writers are absolutely convinced that the dominant White, Male, European History (especially the Age of Exploration and Colonialism) is a narrative of extreme oppression and downright evil aggression, subjugation, exploitation and genocide toward other "Races" and Cultures. To these writers, the latter are portrayed as beautiful, intelligent, creative, innocent victims of "The White Man". To me this ideological perspective (bias) seems to seriously color research, interpretation of historical facts and the resultant alternative Narratives. Admittedly, the authors of the usual, traditional Story have their bias, too. Trying to sort all of this out has been daunting and I make no pretense to having done that. What follows below is a very brief, simplistic overview of a "Territory" that begs for further exploration; but I think it includes the basic essentials to guide further study. To begin with, no one claims that Christopher Columbus was literally the first human being ever to see or find or discover what are now called North and South America! That is an unfair, even silly, popular criticism. If I say I discovered a restaurant or a new recipe, that does not mean or imply no one else has ever known or heard of or frequented that restaurant or used that recipe. All I am saying is that it is new to me. That I found something for myself, does not mean it was lost to everyone else. Columbus was not even the first European to "discover" what we now call North America, Vikings were probably the first, in the 11th Century. The 4 voyages of Columbus took place in the late 15th Century. But long before that, human beings had entered North America and worked their way to the tip of South America. They were the first to literally discover the Americas and the mainstream theory is that these people came from Asia (Siberia). At the height of the last Ice Age, about 17,000 years ago, as the ice sheets advanced and sea levels fell, people first migrated from the Eurasian landmass to the Americas. Also known as The Bering Strait Theory or "short chronology" theory, Land Bridge theory has been widely accepted since the 1930s. This model of migration into the New World proposes that people wandered from Siberia into Alaska, tracking big game animal herds. An exposed land bridge that was at least 1,000 miles wide existed between Siberia and the western coast of Alaska. From the archaeological evidence gathered, it was concluded that this culture of big game hunters crossed the Bering Strait at least 12,000 years ago and could have eventually reached the southern tip of South America by 11,000 years ago. There are at least 5 other Models or Theories that are either variations of the Bering Strait Theory or postulate the possibility of separate migrations from various areas across the Atlantic that populated South America, including one that holds that the earliest settlers in Mexico came from West Africa. As I said, the story is complicated and it becomes more so as we go along. Throughout North America, there were at least 8 "core cultures" with hundreds (?) of related but separate people groups (so-called "Indian Tribes")- there were at least a million people living in "America" by the time Columbus and the Spanish explorers following him arrived (all of whom were looking for a passage to India for trade and gold). Likewise, there were many people groups (and cultures) occupying what we call Central and South America. Migration of all these groups was normal and frequent, which also means competition, war, violence and death by disease and natural disaster was a constant for most of them most of the time (we are talking of 1000's of years here). NOTE: None of these early settlers with Siberian ancestry were Latinos or Hispanics. "Latin America" refers to territories in America where the Spanish or Portuguese languages prevail: Mexico, most of Central and South America, and in the Caribbean, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico. Latin America is usually defined as all those parts of the Americas that were once part of the Spanish and Portuguese Empires. Technically, "Latin America" designates all of those countries and territories in the Americas where a Romance language (i.e., languages derived from Latin) is spoken: Spanish, Portuguese, and French, and the creole languages based upon these. Mesoamerica Mesoamerica is a region extending south and east from central Mexico to

include parts of Guatemala, Belize, Honduras, and Nicaragua. In pre-Columbian times it was inhabited by diverse civilizations. The history of pre-Columbian Mesoamerica is divided into several periods: Paleo-Indian (first human habitation–3500 BCE), Archaic (3500–2000), Pre-Classic Era (2000 BCE–200 CE) saw the rise of large-scale ceremonial architecture, writing, cities, and states. Many of the key elements of Mesoamerican civilization can be traced back to this period, including the dominance of corn, the building of pyramids, human sacrifice, jaguar-worship, the complex calendar, and many of the gods. During this period, the Olmec civilization developed and flourished at such sites as La Venta and San Lorenzo Tenochtitlán, the Zapotec arose in the Valley of Oaxaca, the Teotihuacan civilization arose in the Valley of Mexico, and the Maya civilization began in modern-day Guatemala and expanded into the Yucatán Peninsula. Important early Maya cities include Kaminaljuyu, El Mirador, Nakbe, San Bartolo, Cival and Takalik Abaj. Classic (200 CE–1000CE) lots of competition, alliances, wars between city-states Post-Classic (1000 CE–1697 CE). Mesoamerica received new immigrants from the north, and although these groups were related to the ancient Toltecs, they had a completely different ideology than the existing residents. The final arrivals were the Mexica, who established themselves on a small island on Lake Texcoco under the dominion of the Texpanecs of Azcapotzalco. This group would, in the following decades, conquer a large part of Mesoamerica, creating a united and centralized state whose only rivals were the Tarascan state of Michoacán. Neither one of them could defeat the other, and it seems that a type of non-aggression pact was established between the two peoples. When the Spaniards arrived many of the peoples controlled by the Mexica no longer wished to continue under their rule. Therefore, they took advantage of the opportunity presented by the Europeans, agreeing to support them, thinking that in return they would gain their freedom, and not knowing that this would lead to the subjugation of all of the Mesoamerican world. The latter portion of the Post-classic Period is generally associated with the rise of the Mexica or Aztec Empire. One of the more commonly known cultural groups in Mesoamerica, the Aztec politically dominated nearly all of central Mexico, the Gulf Coast, Mexico's southern Pacific Coast (Chiapas and into Guatemala), Oaxaca, and Guerrero. By all accounts, the Mayan and Aztec Civilizations (and others) were highly developed and are admired for their science, technology, languages, engineering and art work. To this day, people visit and are fascinated by the ruins of their Temples and Cities. Many indigenous Mayans still live in villages and in urban ghettos today. But there is major debate and strong disagreement about the Culture and Religious practices of the Mesoamerican peoples (particularly the Aztecs) in regard to the amount and meaning of blood from Human Sacrifice, Autosacrifice, the use of Cannibalism as both sacrifice and food, as well the practice of Torture. Spanish explorers left many descriptions of these practices, expressing their great revulsion at them. The Post-Classic Period ends with the arrival of the Spanish and their subsequent conquest of the Aztec between 1519 and 1521

Spanish Conquest Columbus, beginning in 1492 and over the next decade, completed four voyages from Spain that led to general European awareness of the American continents in the Western Hemisphere. Those voyages, and his efforts to establish permanent settlements in the island of Hispaniola, initiated the process of Spanish colonization. Columbus never touched North American land. (One of his soldiers eventually did- Juan Ponce de Leon, "discovered" Florida in 1513 and was killed there in 1521,) Columbus eventually visited what are now called Puerto Rico, San Salvador, Cuba, Haiti and the Dominican Republic once named Hispaniola before the island was divided. It was inhabited by the Taínos, one of the indigenous Arawak peoples. The ship, Santa Maria, went aground and its 34 Sailors were left there at a place named La Navidad. It was the first European Colony in the New World and lasted a year but all were killed and the place destroyed by the Tainos. A year later when Columbus returned he established another colony, Isabela. It was destroyed in a hurricane and he then established Santo Domingo, which and remains the Capital City of the Dominican Republic. The Spanish conquest of the Aztecs happened 27 years after Columbus first arrived. Hernán Cortés [Pizarro], a Castilian, went to Mexico and executed a successful strategy of allying with some indigenous peoples against others and overthrew the Aztec Empire. It was one of the most important campaigns in the Spanish colonization of the Americas. The invasion began in February 1519 and was acclaimed victorious on August 13, 1521, by a coalition army of Spanish conquistadors and Tlaxcalan warriors against the Aztec Empire. Cortez returned to Spain in 1541 and died.

Reasons to Commemorate Columbus Day There is no argument that there were atrocities committed on all sides in the years of conquest to come. It is also true that among the conquering Spanish Conquistadors there were priests and monks who were on a very serious mission, not for Gold or Glory, but to spread the Gospel and make converts of the indigenous peoples to the Catholic Faith. It is very disturbing to think that there were millions of people in the Americas for thousands of years who had never heard of Christ or Salvation through Him. (That is still true of more than 2 billion people alive on the earth today!) Although there were many terrible consequences of the Spanish Conquest of the Americas during this time period, the Gospel (even if in a very primitive form) was spread through out the area. To Christians, this is a very good thing and worth commemorating. The Latino "Race" celebrated on "Columbus Day" did not exist before Columbus. It would most likely never have come into existence without him and the Spanish settlements. To Latinos, who value what that "Race" has become, that is a good thing also worth commemorating.