



# Piety & Politics: The Right-Wing Assault on Religious Freedom

*Barry W. Reverend Lynn*

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The Reverend Barry Lynn explains why the Religious Right has it all wrong.

In the wake of the 2004 presidential election, the Religious Right insisted that George Bush had been handed a mandate for an ideology-based social agenda, including the passage of a “marriage amendment” to ban same-sex unions, diversion of tax money to religious groups through “faith-based initiatives,” the teaching of creationism in public schools, and restrictions on abortion. Led by an aggressive band of television preachers and extremist radio personalities, the Religious Right set its sights on demolishing the wall of separation between church and state.

The Reverend Barry Lynn is a devout Christian, but this propaganda effort disturbs him deeply. He argues that politicians need to stop looking to the Bible to justify their actions and should consult another source instead: the U.S. Constitution.

When the Founding Fathers of our great nation created the Constitution, they had seen firsthand the dangers of an injudicious mix of religion and government. They knew what it was like to live under the yoke of state-imposed faith. They drew up a model for the new nation that would allow absolute freedom of religion. They knew that religion, united with the raw power of government, spawns tyranny.

Yet the Religious Right now seems distrustful of those principles inherent in the Constitution, viewing the separation of church and state only as a dangerous anti-Christian principle imposed upon our nation. In reality, the separation between church and state has been an important ally to religion: with the state out of the picture, hundreds of religions have grown and prospered. Religion doesn’t need the government’s assistance, any more than it is practical or appropriate for religious doctrine to be fostered in the government or taught in public schools.

As an explicitly religious figure speaking out against the Religious Right, Lynn has incurred the wrath of such personalities as Pat Buchanan, Jerry Falwell, and Pat Robertson, who once said Lynn was “lower than a child molester.” Lynn has continuously taken on these radicals of the Religious Right calmly and rationally, using their own statements and religious fervor to prove that when they attack the constitutionally mandated separation, they’re actually attacking freedom of religion.

In *Piety & Politics*, the Reverend Barry Lynn continues the fight—educating Americans about what is at stake, explaining why it is crucial that we maintain the separation of church and state, and galvanizing us to defend the honor of our religious freedom.

*From the Hardcover edition.*

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