

# DONALD TRUMP

## *A different approach*



A prominent Christian and mission leader from the US, and a good friend of INcontext Ministries, shared his thoughts on a recent article by INcontext: “**POLITICS IN THE AGE OF TRUMP**”.

(Read it here: <http://incontextministries.org/images/AgeofTrump.pdf>)

Providing a balanced understanding of key global events remains one of the core values of INcontext Ministries, so we are including his full response below (P. 1-4).

Thereafter, we share a Christian response to the recent gathering of more than 1,000 Evangelical leaders in a meeting with Donald Trump (p. 5-6).

### A DIFFERENT APPROACH

“As I read your latest article on Trump (*Politics in the Age of Trump* – May 2016), I found that there were many times that I questioned the approach being taken when it came to analysing how he ‘got’ the Republican nomination, and how the mainstream media is analysing this as well. I want to see if I can maybe add to the discussion from a slightly different point of view. Let me state right up front that I am NOT a Donald

Trump supporter, and did not vote for him in the Primary Elections. And Donald Trump did not win overwhelmingly – he did it slowly, over the course of many State Primaries, and really was the last man standing out of a pool of 17 candidates. If Ted Cruz and Marco Rubio could have cooperated early, a combination of them would have most likely won the Republican Primary. It was not a ‘Trump avalanche’ by any means until the end, and Trump still has a major way to go to unite what is now a very divided Republican Party.

**FIRSTLY**, I think it is very important to understand how **fractured** America is right now. We have not been divided like this since our horrific and tragic civil war back in the 1860s. Texas has on its ballot, this year, a provision that would allow it, if needs be, to secede from the United States. Other states like California have on their ballots initiatives that would further divide states into smaller ones, so that those in more conservative areas would be better represented (the California one would divide the state into six states!). The forces that are ripping us apart in some ways are the same that caused the American Civil War (Federal Government power versus local and State power). President Obama is categorically the worst president that the US has ever had, and has violated the US Constitution and Bill of Rights again and again with executive overreach and unconstitutional creation of laws from the Executive or Judicial branch – laws in the US are CLEARLY to be made by our Congress, NOT our unelected judges or the president. Obama goes around the checks and balances again and again and again, and our ‘stacked’ Supreme Court lets it go on pretty much unabated, and our ‘spineless’ Congress does very little to defund, vote against, or just plain outlaw what he is doing. The creation from thin air for the ‘right’ to redefine holy matrimony and marriage is just one in a long line of egregious abuses.

We are calling ‘good’ evil (like forcing a convent of nuns to hold insurance that provides abortions, against their wishes, against the First Amendment to our Constitution that guarantees freedom of religion without government intervention), and the list goes on and on and on. And you know well that we are now calling ‘evil’ good.



So, the 'heartland' of America is literally fed up. Trump is too, and has been able to articulate that sentiment like no other: fed up with lobbyists who use corporate dollars and greed to keep electing Congressmen who will do their bidding; fed up with out-of-control 'political correctness'; fed up with Christians being the only class of people who can be offended at will, and that their rights and sensibilities do not matter – regardless of the fact that it was Christianity, and Judeo-Christian ethics, upon which this nation was founded. John Adams, our second president, said this: "Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."

**SECONDLY**, Trump is an **outsider politically**, and your article does tap on that. But it cannot be stressed enough how deeply America feels that it has been sold out by special interest groups, establishment politics, and common sense run amok. Yes, Trump is truly a bombast. And he is a 'showman' – he understands the importance of media, and the way to stand out in the fog of information overload. But when you said this in your article, in the context of a 'strongman': 'Trump is merely the first Westerner (aside from Putin) to exhibit such strong leanings', I thought to myself, 'No, that's not right.' Trump reminds people of the strength of someone you did not mention in your article, **Ronald Reagan**, and arguably one of the best presidents America has had in a very, very long time. Ronald Reagan brought an end to the Cold War and the Soviet Union by making it clear that 'if you mess with us, we are going to wreck you' and 'always negotiate from a place of confident strength, not compromised principles and weakness'. That's why the 1970s Iran Crisis ended, and that's why Gorbachov couldn't keep up. But interestingly enough, Reagan didn't start any wars, and yet everyone said going in that he was a war-monger. I'm not defending Trump, but what I am saying is that many Americans want a president who will simply do what he says. The Iranians and the Russians believed that Reagan would do what he said. Folks believe that Trump will as well, and are sick and tired of political speak, double-speak, and just flat-out lying, like Hillary Clinton (only 34% of Americans in all polls taken believe she is 'trustworthy'). We may not like all of Trump's policies, and fair enough! But we do tend to take him at his word. That is rare today in politics, and people are fed up – they want straight talk. You get that with Trump.

**THIRDLY**, I am not convinced that the media outside the US, and even inside the US, have really taken the time to evaluate where Trump really stands on the most important issues facing America today. They listen to comments, some of them rude, outrageous, and pretty rough, but they also don't take in the whole story, and just grab the flashy soundbites. Trump has outlined these on his website, and watch carefully what happens at the Republican Convention in Cleveland, where they will hammer out the Party Platform, because really, that is what you are voting for in America when you vote for the president of the Party. The Party Platform lets you see across the board where not only the presidential nominee stands, but also what that person is going to set about doing, and their colleagues in the House and Senate as well (Congress).

One look at the Democratic Party Platform, and it is honestly difficult to see how a follower of Jesus could actually vote for them. Where they stand on moral issues is very anti-biblical, and the way that they want to achieve financial equality and other kinds of 'equality' through strict government regulation and enforcement puts them on a much closer par with Vladimir Lenin and Chairman Mao than with ancient Jewish laws, economic practices, and Jesus' exhortations for individual stewardship and reward, with a heavy dose of ethical commitment. There are things in the Republican Platform that are troubling – most things run by human beings will eventually have those – but Trump, if elected, will need to stick to the Platform if he wants Congress to pass laws enacting his policies, and he will be held in check by a currently liberal Supreme Court as well. He cannot be a dictator, and the hints in your article to that end were honestly a bit disconcerting and misrepresentative of our government. President Obama, on the other hand, has been ruling much closer to a dictatorship, by using his executive power to bypass the checks and balances of the American governmental system, as outlined above. In that way, Obama, not Trump, is actually closer to being a dictator!

Take the 'wall with Mexico' for example:

There are over 11 million undocumented/illegal aliens in the US today, almost ALL of which have come across our porous southern border. The violence, the drugs, the illegal behaviour – it goes on and on. More crime in California, for example, is being committed by illegal aliens than by any other sector of society. The issue has become a clear and present threat to the economy of some of our states (California, Arizona, New Mexico), and people are fed up. And on the other side, it also lends itself to exploitation, which is also evil. The primary job of our president, according to our Constitution, is to protect our nation. Obama is not doing that

very well, and Hillary Clinton has promised to follow in Obama's footsteps. Recently there were a spate of beheadings and retribution murders, and a rise in gang warfare. We continue to find HUGE amounts of illegal drugs being smuggled into our nation, and the drug situation here is epidemic and slowly destroying our country from the inside out. If you want more on this issue, just check out [this article](#) from the *Washington Times*.



So Trump steps up and says, 'We are going to put a stop to this.' Unfortunately, it comes out (and has been misquoted, taken as a stand-alone comment, not nuanced by further comments and additions) that Trump thinks all Mexican immigrants are murderers, rapists, etc. Many Hispanics are starting to get this (see an *International Business Times* article [here](#)). While it is true that illegals disregard US law and our borders, and they do bring crime, drugs, and rape, IT IS A SMALL PERCENTAGE THAT DO SO, and it would've been good if Trump could've said that in the same comment.

Yes, he shoots off his crude mouth, and 'from the hip' as we say, but with a guy like that, there is much more you need to look at. Who does he surround himself with? Who advises him? (He has surrounded himself lately with some awesome advisors, like Senator Sessions from Alabama, and Dr Ben Carson, the world-renowned neurosurgeon and former Republican candidate, and that list will grow.) Trump has also pledged (and has released the names) of who he will appoint as the next Supreme Court nominees, and has said all along that he is a **Constitutional Conservative**. This means that our justices DO NOT MAKE LAWS from the bench, but rather interpret the laws Congress makes to see if they are Constitutional, NOT PROGRESSIVE, like the laws the Supreme Court made in our country concerning abortion and gay marriage (oxymoron that phrase). I cannot stress to you enough how important that is, and what it says about Trump, versus Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton, who are totally 110% Constitutional Progressives, who totally believe that the 'ends justify the means', and have made it clear that they will nominate judges who will continue to erode and sand-blast the Judeo-Christian foundation that America was built on.

About Muslims:

I personally am an unashamed-of-the-Gospel Evangelical follower of Jesus Christ, and my trust is not in chariots, horses, Supreme Court Justices, or the US dollar or government. But any government that allows (without thoroughly checking) people into their country who may be mass-murderers is a government that is not doing its job. Trump did not say he would ban all Muslims from ever coming to the US (as has been quoted): he said that he would put a ban in place, until the US immigration services got its act together to better ascertain who it was letting in – and this was in response to many acts of terror (Paris, Brussels, the act of terror in California that left 17 people dead at the hands of Islamic extremists, and now the atrocity in Orlando which is the worst terror attack on American soil since 9/11).

So Trump gets labelled a racist. I personally think that is not true. His hiring policies and his businesses make that very clear if someone looks. He has hired, trained, and promoted women, blacks, Hispanics, Asians etc. in a non-partisan way through his myriad of businesses. But it is totally in the remit of the President of the United States to task his Border and Homeland Security Departments to set up sane and not-politically correct systems to make sure that immigrants are properly vetted, and to not just let in everyone willy-nilly, which is what they have been doing under the Obama administration (Obama does this because it has been documented and proven that folks let in like that are MUCH more likely to vote Democrat, and thus Obama can fill the voting booths with more Democrats this way). I know that sounds cynical, but it's true. Trump stands for the folks who say 'That's enough of that nonsense!' And you would be surprised at

how many Arab-Americans agree with Trump (check out [this article](#) from *Al Arabiya* as an example, and [this one](#) from the *Arab Daily News*, about Arab Christians – a VERY interesting read).



**FOURTHLY**, I LOVED the Jeff Fountain quote at the end of your article, but I was not happy with this next statement, because it paints Trump with too wide a brush, and even though I read your article word for word, the conclusion of this statement is really not true when it comes to understanding the US right now, especially conservatives, Evangelical Christians and Republicans:

‘Strongmen leaders like Donald Trump would not have gained such vast support if people were not desperate for a kind of hope and security that secular democracy does not offer.’

I would rather say this for the US right now: ‘Political outsiders like Donald Trump would not have gained the support they have, if people were not totally disgusted and disillusioned with the status-quo of American establishment-corrupt politics, the Constitutional violations of the current presidential administration, and the

morass of political correctness run amok. With the looming shadow of a possible Hillary Clinton presidency, most conservative Americans are horrified at the prospect of someone so corrupt, so political, so immoral, and so antithetical to their deeply-held values ever gaining the presidency of the United States of America.’

Sorry to be critical – but this latest piece on Trump, while trying to understand him in the light of the larger move to the political right in Europe, doesn't understand him totally in light of what is actually going on in America right now. We don't need Trump to be our saviour. We need someone to be a wrecking-ball to the secular-progressive agenda, the political establishment and political correctness that has run rough-shod over our Constitution and our conservative sensibilities. Trump has stepped forward and said that he will be that wrecking-ball. He is not the product of weak people needing a strongman. He is the product of strong-minded men and women who have had enough of their religious liberties being taken away by a corrupt and anti-Christian administration, had enough of being taxed way too much, had enough of all of our manufacturing jobs being taken out of the country by stupid trade policies, had enough of being lied to again and again by the Democratic Party. On many conservative issues in America, Trump is talking the language of at least 50% of the American people.”

## A SHIFTING APPROACH

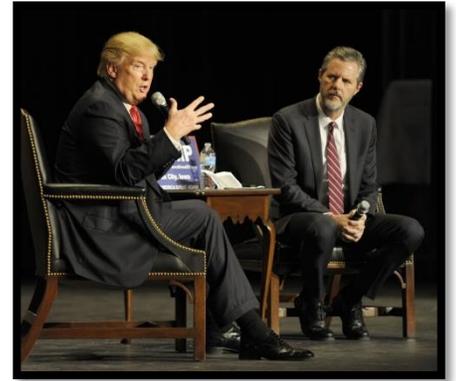
In November, when Americans head to the polls to cast their vote for a new president, American Evangelicals will play a major role in the outcome. 72% of Evangelicals support the Republican Party and their candidates, whereas only 20% of Evangelicals lean Democratic. Furthermore, Evangelicals support candidates who support Israel.

Therefore the Evangelical view of the electoral candidates will prove to be a tipping point. Christian conservatives are likely to vote in greater numbers in November than other ‘groups’, giving them a large say in who runs the country. 49% of Evangelicals say they have a great deal of interest or quite a bit of interest in news about the elections, compared to 38% of non-evangelicals.

This section offers an ‘inside look’ from a local US perspective, and does not address the international impact of the elections or the global perceptions of some of the reported comments by Mr Trump.

On 21 June 2016, Donald Trump met with over 1,000 Evangelicals in New York City in an exclusive get-together where he answered questions from a diverse group of Christian religious leaders.

The event was organised by non-profit groups **My Faith Votes** and **United in Purpose**, and was opened by former Republican presidential candidate Dr Ben Carson and Pastor Franklin Graham.



Some well-known leaders at the event (which was moderated by former **Arkansas Governor** Mike Huckabee) included the following:

- Ralph Reed, head of **Christian Coalition**
- Greg Quinlan of **Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays & Gays**
- Tony Perkins of **Family Research Council**
- Penny Young Nance, president of **Concerned Women for America (CWA)**
- Matt Barber, author, columnist, cultural analyst and attorney concentrating in constitutional law, and founder and editor-in chief of **BarbWire.com**
- Dr James Dobson, founder of **Focus on the Family** and **Family Talk**
- Franklin Graham, president of **Samaritan's Purse** and the **Billy Graham Evangelistic Association**
- Jerry Falwell Jr., Southern Baptist pastor, televangelist, founder of **Liberty University** and a conservative political commentator
- Ronnie Floyd, former **Southern Baptist Convention** president
- Dr Ben Carson, former Republican presidential candidate and opponent of Donald Trump
- Well-known public policy leaders like Gary Bauer and Marjorie Dannenfelser, as well as mega-church pastors like Dr David Jeremiah

Here is an overview of some of the responses and reflections of those who attended:

**PENNY YOUNG NANCE, president of Concerned Women for America (CWA)**

*"The event was successful on many levels. It's important to note that Donald Trump won the primary fair and square and, in the process, secured more votes than any other Republican in primary history. I understand the issues that many of my conservative colleagues have expressed and what gives them pause in supporting Trump. I, too, find troubling his divisive and sometimes demeaning language. I don't like some of what he says, but I don't like almost everything that Hillary Clinton does. Everyone has to answer to their own conscience before the Lord. I supported others in the primary, but Donald Trump won. Everyone must come to terms with that fact, and the option now is to support him or not.*

*Trump really shined on two issues: Court appointments and Israel. I was very gratified to hear him for the first time give a full-throated support for America's closest ally in the Middle East, Israel. In the past, he has made statements about 'remaining neutral' when, of course, there is no moral equivalency in the right of the Jewish State to exist and defend her people and the Palestinian wish to 'wipe Israel off the map'. This time Donald Trump rose to the occasion, giving a scathing assessment of the Iran deal as 'one of the worse deals I have ever seen' and stating that 'Obama has forsaken Israel.' Both of those statements elicited nodding heads and applause...*

*There is no doubt in my mind that Donald Trump is much more closely aligned with my views than Hillary Clinton in almost every area. He has my head, but (I still need him) to win my heart."*

Find her full response here:

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/the-question-trump-never-answered-at-his-meeting-with-evangelicals-165779/#0zEcMfo1oO7CYmMM.99>

**MATT BARBER, founder and editor-in chief of BarbWire.com:**

In his response, Matt Barber was quick to point out that it is no secret that he enthusiastically endorsed Senator Ted Cruz during the primary campaign and has been an outspoken critic of Mr Trump's. His report of the meeting included the following:

*"While I maintain many of my original reservations, after Tuesday's meeting, and as I told CBN News in an interview immediately following the event, I can now count myself among other Christian leaders in attendance who have moved from the 'Never Trump' camp, to the 'Maybe Trump' category.*

*For better or worse, this election has come down to two people: Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump. Anyone who thinks that some third-party candidate or parliamentary shenanigans at the GOP Convention in Cleveland will change this reality are fooling themselves. Either Donald Trump or Hillary Clinton will be the next president of the United States.*

*I believe that if Hillary Clinton is elected, America is done, the US Constitution is toast, and she will finish what Obama began — the 'fundamental transformation' of America into a godless, neo-Marxist Third World banana republic.*

*We've had decades of the Clintons to establish beyond any reasonable doubt that this woman is not only the most corrupt elitist to ever seek the presidency, she's an evil ideologue hell-bent on the abolition of individual liberties and religious freedom. While Great Britain just voted to reclaim its national sovereignty, a vote for Hillary Clinton is a vote to completely relinquish our own.*

*Which leaves us Donald Trump.*

*While in many ways Mr Trump remains a wild card and though I do remain sceptical, I saw a different side to him during Tuesday's meeting. I appreciated, for instance, that he displayed a level of genuine humility, I believe, and a sincere willingness to listen and understand both our concerns about him and his past, as well as our concerns about America's future."*

Find the full article here:

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/from-nevertrump-to-maybe-trump-165717/#1zZRDCTcgtMHjtM.99>

**JERRY FALWELL JR. and RALPH REED**

Ralph Reed, the president of the *Faith & Freedom Coalition* and former executive director of the *Christian Coalition*, said that two particular remarks that Trump made in the meeting could likely make a difference for undecided Evangelical leaders.

The first thing was that Trump promised to end a "longstanding ban on church politicking" (currently, any church or religious NPO can lose their tax exemption if they promote a particular political candidate or engage in political/civil activities). The second point that Trump made that resonated with many attendees was a vow to appoint only 'pro-life' Supreme Court justices.

*"This is the first time in modern American history that we have gone into a presidential election with a vacancy on the Supreme Court on a court that is divided and split right down the middle — four liberals and four conservatives... It isn't just the presidency on the line, it is the entire federal judiciary. [Trump] has released a list of 11 names, who are outstanding people, who will decide on what we care about from life to religious freedom to Obamacare, down the line. I think that is very important to conservative voters of faith."*

Falwell, one of Mr Trump's biggest evangelical endorsers throughout the primary elections, said that Trump displayed "a deeper understanding than I have ever seen before on issues that are important to conservatives and to Christians".

*"I was very impressed. He was very presidential... He talked a lot about his Supreme Court nominees. He talked a lot about how they are going to be pro-life. He talked about support for the nation of Israel. He was strong on that issue. That was*

*something that was very important for the group in that room. He also talked about so many other issues that are so important... I was honoured to introduce him and I tried to point out to the crowd that we have such a simple choice this election."*

Falwell also said that Mr Trump participated in the conversation for much longer than he probably intended.

Read more here:

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/franklin-graham-jerry-falwell-jr-ralph-reed-trump-meeting-evangelicals-165586/#CdMgEltR23wMVFie.99>

***DR JAMES DOBSON, founder of Focus on the Family and Family Talk***

*In an interview with Pastor Michael Anthony of GodFactor.com, Dr Dobson said, "There are a lot of people ministering to [Donald Trump] personally — a lot of ministers... He did accept a relationship with Christ. I know the person who led him to Christ, and that's fairly recent. I don't know when it was, but it has not been long."*

*Dobson added: "I believe he really made a commitment, but he's a baby Christian. We all need to be praying for him, especially if there is a possibility of him being our next chief executive officer."*

Read more at:

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/has-donald-trump-accepted-jesus-christ-james-dobson-says-yes-165692/#2LVVKUgZ0xjAlt40.99>



Whatever the outcome may be in November, there is no doubt that the impact of this election will stretch far beyond the borders of the USA. The global body of Christ has a mandate to pray for America and for this event that could change missions, and perceptions about Western missionaries, for years to come. Let us pray for discernment, wisdom and courage.



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