

## RELIGION AND MORALITY

Progressive democrats are being characterized as anti-religion and pro-abortion. Those claims are of course not true, but we need to explain why they aren't.

### A. Separation of church and state and religious pluralism

1. In our society it is a given that people should be free to worship as they please—or not to worship, if they see fit. The religion of some minority should not be imposed on all of us.
2. The Judaeo-Christian tradition strongly supports social justice, and for believers, supplies the theoretical underpinning for a commitment to social justice.
3. Hence the mistreatment of people because of race, sex, religion, etc. is a moral evil. Furthermore, the “haves” are under a moral obligation to share of their surplus with those who are less fortunate.
4. Our religious heritage thus supports progressive social programs. It is opposed to social Darwinism, rugged individualism, and other social philosophies which make a virtue of selfishness.
5. A subtle religious approach suggests that strong concern for human dignity tends to be too “worldly.” We submit that that is flawed theology. Loving God and loving our fellow humans go hand in hand.

### B. Abortion

1. Virtually no one, certainly not progressives, believes abortion is a good thing. The problem is, what policy to adopt in a pluralistic society.
2. The “right to life” certainly extends to all persons. There is a difficulty, however, as to whether unborn fetuses are persons.
3. The “right to choose”, in regard to whether to carry a pregnancy to term, is not an absolute right. Even the Supreme Court allowed for restrictions on third term abortions.
4. As much as possible, government should be kept out of these cases. The decision is mainly the responsibility of the interested parties. That is, we should privatize moral decisions and actions.
5. Those religious people who say that abortion should be discouraged are right. But a consistent position here entails: (a) Promotion of family-planning and other measures to avoid unwanted pregnancies. (b) In lieu of government intervention, a media campaign to inform people about the issues. (c) A support system, both private and public, for those whose circumstances incline them to desire abortions. This support would be medical, psychological, and financial.