

An Open Letter to Christians in the Orange Area

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Like many of you when I heard the news that Osama Bin Laden had been killed, I breathed a sigh of relief. I began to think of how over the past decade, thousands of men and women had searched and given their lives trying to find this man. This man who was behind one of the greatest acts of terror this country had ever seen was now not able to cause anymore pain or destruction. However, as the new broadcasts and reports brought more images and videos, I was struck by the celebrations that were taking place around the country. Celebrations over the death of a human being, over the death of a person created in the Image of God.

How are we as Christians supposed to respond? As followers of Christ, we are called to a higher standard, a better standard, albeit a different standard. The gospel of Jesus Christ has been summed up many times by many faithful followers as a “gospel of love.” How can this love be shown if we celebrate that a man was murdered. Don’t get me wrong, when September 11th happened ten years ago, I too called for Osama Bin Laden to be found and killed, but now that it has happened I am not sure that was the proper course of action. Yes, he should have been found and brought to justice for the murder of 3,000 people, but celebrating his death is not something that I believe that Jesus Christ would have advocated.

In the Gospel of Matthew we find these words: “You have heard that it was said, “You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.” But I say to you, *Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous.* For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have?” (Matthew 5:43-46, NRSV, emphasis added). This, my brothers and sisters, is the response we are to take. We are to pray for those who wish to do us as Christians and Americans harm, but the love that was shown in Christ through his life, ministry, death and glorious resurrection cannot be shown if we allow our actions not to reflect what we find in our holy book. The actions we take must reflect the character and nature of God.

I pray that we as the faithful of Jesus Christ can bring forth a message of love and compassion, not one that is contradictory to the message we find in our Lord and Savior.

In Christ,

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