

# "The Truth Factor"

## A Review Of "The O'Reilly Factor"

Fox News Channel's Bill O'Reilly styles himself as an independent in political matters, which means he is supposed to look at issues in an objective manner. In truth, independents, like "moderates" or those who take a "neutral" stand, often contradict themselves from one issue to another.

Mr. O'Reilly has written a book which shares the same title of his nightly news analysis program, The O'Reilly Factor. In it he espouses his view on a variety of subjects, from "the class factor" to "the gratitude factor." Often, we agree with his opinions on and criticisms of people, policies, politics, and politicians. However, there are two chapters in which we disagree with him nearly from start to finish, "the religion factor" and "the sex factor."

### The Religion Factor

In chapter fourteen, "the religion factor," Mr. O'Reilly writes, "And the fundamentalists really hate it when I say something like this: The most important thing I can say about religion is that it's a good thing for all of us to have. It doesn't matter what you believe--as long as you believe in something" (p. 163, emphasis in original). Really? You would think that as a Catholic, Mr. O'Reilly would take a different stand than this. "The truth factor," the Bible, says that it does matter what one believes. A young prophet in 1 Kings 13 believed something, a lie, and paid for it with his life. Saul believed he was doing God's will when he spared king Agag and the best of the flock, but he was told his rebellion was a "witchcraft" and his stubbornness was like "idolatry" (1 Sam. 15). Saul was removed from being king because of his belief in something. Jesus said that there will be those on the day of judgment who believe they have done good according to His will, only to find out their belief in something was an erroneous and soul damning belief (Matt. 7:21-23). These men were not idolaters, infidels, or immoral, either. They believed in something, but not the right thing. Too, Cornelius was "devout...feared God with all his household...gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always" (Acts 10:1-2). Yet, Cornelius needed to hear words from Peter that would save him and his household (Acts 11:13-14). Did Cornelius believe in something? Then why did he need to be saved? Because he did not believe in the right thing!

On page 165 of The O'Reilly Factor, we find the following:

My guest, a Baptist pastor, insisted that Jews were bound for Hell if they didn't swing on over to the Baptist side. (Catholics were not in such good shape, either.) I pointed out to him that I didn't think Jesus had this attitude when he engaged with all kinds of people back there in Galilee.

This, along with other statements, shows how terribly ignorant O'Reilly is when it comes to Bible matters. Beyond question "the truth factor" reveals that Jesus condemned the Jews more than any other group, and their religious leaders most of all. He did not condemn them for not being Baptist, though, for no such thing existed in His time and is wholly without Bible authority. Rather, Jesus condemned the unbelieving Jews. He said, "Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins" (Jn. 8:24). Through the apostle who recorded that last quote, Jesus said, "Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son" (1 Jn. 2:22). We also learn from John that "all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone" (Rev. 21:8). Indeed, Jesus did insist that all unbelieving Jews are "bound for Hell" who do not swing over to His side.

Mr. O'Reilly also writes,

So I do not believe in an angry God who will punish human beings for having different spiritual beliefs from my fundamentalists Christian pen pals. Yes, I believe very strongly that evil will be punished. But God isn't keeping a list and checking it twice. If you try to be kind, responsible, and honest, good things will likely happen to you--both on this earth and in the hereafter, whatever it is (p. 166).

True, God will not punish people for having different views from the "fundamentalists Christian pen pals," but He will certainly punish those who have different views from Him. In fact, Jesus will come "in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (2 Thes. 1:8-9). This includes most "fundamentalists."

"God isn't keeping a list and checking it twice"? "And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the

books...And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:12-15). "And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life" (Phil. 4:3). "The truth factor" reveals a list is being kept!

## The Sex Factor

Now let's turn our attention to the third chapter of his book, "the sex factor." O'Reilly makes some obviously true statements, a few which some Christians are unwilling to admit. For instance, "Situation comedies, police dramas, daytime soaps, tabloid-TV "news," interview programs--they're loaded with sexual content, from flesh shots to smirking suggestions" (p. 32). He goes on to write:

What is the hit comedy Friends but a show about sex? The six attractive young leads are either having sex or talking about it whenever you happen to surf in...Sex is what they do....

But the constant sex of TV and movies doesn't get me all worked up about declining values and ready to mount a moral high horse. As advertisers know, they are giving us what we want.

True, true. Yet, there are a number of Christians who see nothing wrong with TV and movies filled with sexual content. They watch it. They let their children watch it. Then when "little Susie" gets pregnant, they wonder, "What went wrong?"

Even in the face of his observations about the condition of our society, O'Reilly sees nothing wrong with it. He writes, "There's nothing wrong with men lusting all the time for beautiful women, as long as we are housebroken. Constant desire keeps men mentally occupied and out of trouble. We must have our sexual fantasies, ladies" (p. 30). Jesus said, "But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matt. 5:28). Lust leads to more lust, sin, not less. "But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived" (2 Tim. 3:13). "But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness" (2 Tim. 2:16). David's lust for Bathsheba led to adultery, lies, and murder (2 Sam. 11). Instead of insisting upon having his "fantasies," David later said, "Have mercy upon me, O God...For I acknowledge my transgressions, And my sin is always before me" (Psa. 51:1-3).

On page 34, O'Reilly writes:

On the other hand, religious fanatics who demonize gays and other alternative groups aren't covering themselves with glory, either. Yes, I know about the references to homosexuality as "an abomination" in Leviticus, but I also know what the Old Testament says about slavery. As long as a sexual issue is not intruding on your freedom or endangering your kids, leave it to God to sort it out. The Deity is a lot smarter than we are. That's also in the Bible.

Yes, God is smarter than us, that is why He revealed His will to us. His wisdom is greater (cf. 1 Cor. 1:25). In His wisdom He said that neither "homosexuals, nor sodomites...will inherit the kingdom of God"-- translation, they will go to Hell (1 Cor. 6:9-10). In man's claim to be wise, he approves of homosexual and lesbian "lifestyles", but in this God declares him to be a fool (Rom. 1:22, 24-27).

When addressing drugs, O'Reilly calls for punishment and treatment of drug addicts in "the drug and alcohol factor" chapter. But, when discussing sex, he says, "I'm not calling for abstinence here. That would be intrusive and ridiculous" (p. 27). What is ridiculous is his call for abstinence from drugs (which is evidently not intrusive), but not from something equally as dangerous and life-damaging as pre-marital or extra-marital sex--"the truth factor" condemns both (Gal. 5:19-21; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; 7:1-2; Matt. 19:9). This is what we meant by "independents" contradicting themselves from issue to issue. Different standards are applied to issues that are essentially the same.

Finally, we must recognize that popular men, such as Bill O'Reilly (with the number one cable news analysis program and a New York Times Best Seller) are not the standard of truth, even though they say many good things. "The truth factor" is in the Bible, and the Bible alone. It is the infallible Word of God by which men are saved and will be judged (Rom. 1:16; Jn. 12:48). Therefore, let us live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God!

Steven F. Deaton