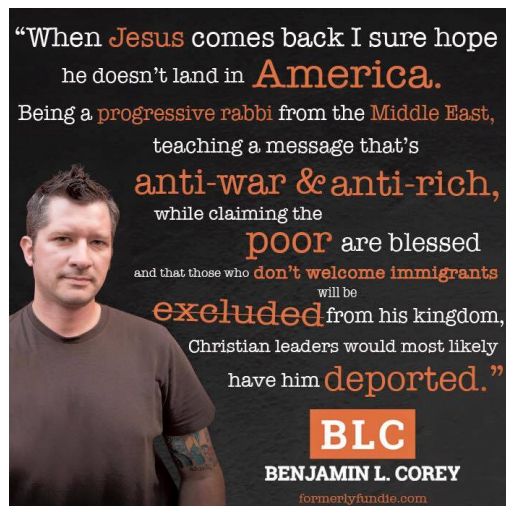


Was Jesus a progressive rabbi?

By [Dennis Sanders](#)

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Before I say anything, take a look at this graphic:



I've seen a few people on Facebook share this image from theologian Benjamin Corey and I have to say that it bothers me. Maybe Corey thinks he is sharing the gospel truth, but I don't think he's doing that. He is peddling a Jesus in his own image, one who surprisingly likes what Corey likes and hates what Corey hates. Which means he isn't doing anything that different than what conservative Christians do with Jesus.

When I made my journey from evangelicalism to mainline/progressive Christianity in the '90s, I was expecting to join a faith that wasn't so captive to American politics. I soon discovered that this wasn't the case; the Christian left was no better than the Religious Right. My hopes were raised again a decade later with the rise of the emergent church. It built itself as something apart from the left and right, but over time it was co-opted and became an organ of the political left.

This is why I have a hard time calling myself a progressive Christian. What I've seen more often than not is a mirror version of conservative Christianity; a faith that reflects culture and ideology and not God.

The problem with Corey's Jesus is that he's rather safe. What I mean is that he doesn't challenge Corey's political beliefs at all. Jesus isn't Lord but the handmaiden of progressive politics.

My right-of-center politics are always challenged by Christ's call to care for the least of these, as they should be. If I don't feel any tension between my ideology and my theology, I'm doing this faith thing wrong. My frustration here is that there seems to be no tension at all with Corey. I guess Jesus is just cool with that.

I left evangelicalism because I was tired of God being used as some kind of conservative cheerleader. I was tired of God being considered a loyal Republican. But I am equally tired of progressive Christians who want to make Jesus a liberal Democrat. What it means is that we stop thinking about how the church should respond in society and instead spend time think how God would have us respond. Odds are it will be something that will bother Corey and his conservative counterpart.

*Originally posted at [The Clockwork Pastor](#)*