

Carter draws contrasts with Bush on faith: Presidents differ on peace and poverty

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Former president Jimmy Carter says he doesn't doubt that President Bush has a sincere faith, but says he and Bush practice their Christianity differently.

"I have a commitment to worship the Prince of Peace, not the prince of preemptive war," the former president told reporters at a breakfast sponsored this month by the *Christian Science Monitor*.

Carter, the nation's 39th president, said he also differs with the Bush administration on the issue of poverty.

"I believe that Christ taught us to give special attention to the plight of the poor," said Carter, a Baptist who ended his affiliation with the conservative Southern Baptist Convention in 2000. "In my opinion, this administration—I'm not talking about President Bush personally—has committed itself to extol the advantages of the rich. . . . Almost every major change that's been made in our taxation system has been to enrich the already extremely rich Americans."

Carter made his remarks November 3 in Washington at an appearance publicizing his new book, *Our Endangered Values: America's Moral Crisis*, which he called his first political volume.

"I have felt for a number of years that we have had such a dramatic and profound and unprecedented change in basic American politics," he said. "There's been an increase in basic fundamentalism . . . both within the religious community of our country and also within government and an unprecedented and overt—not disguised—merger of the church and the state, of religion and politics," he said. – *Religion News Service*