

Dear Friends,

In the book, "Jesus and John Wayne" the writer tells of the Billy Graham crusades that brought John Wayne to the stage to talk about American values. Even though John Wayne wasn't much of a Christian, his on-screen characters were all about American can-do, rugged individualism that solved problems using violence. This was the birth of our American Evangelicalism that has permeated and drenched our culture today. This continued in the 2012 Presidential race by bringing Clint Eastwood (Dirty Harry) to the stage to show how real Americans were, not this interloper President Barack Obama, wondering if "He feels lucky..." There is a bumper sticker out there that says, "If Jesus was armed, he wouldn't have been crucified" and lots of conservative politicians have guns in their political campaigns and even their Christmas cards are packing heat.

We have lots of idols in America, to be rich, to be famous, the flag of patriotism, and the gun. To own one, of any make or size, has become the right of any 'red-blooded' American (ie WHITE) and there should be no infringements. Never mind that over 90% of mass shootings are perpetrated by WHITE men. Never mind that when there were good restrictions on assault weapons, the number of mass shootings and the carnage from them were much less. The right to own a gun is more important than the life of any child who is going to school or minority who is shopping for groceries. 90% of weapons that are sold around the world come from our country. We smuggle drugs from and through Mexico and Mexicans smuggle weapons from our nation.

The convergence of the right for white Americans to own weapons of mass destruction and the right of conservatives to claim a buff, macho, aggressive Christ who is blond and blue-eyed (don't forget, he wrote the Constitution) is a violence to the soul of our nation and a blood stain on par with the Inquisition in Spain for the Church of Jesus, who is the Prince of Peace, the Lamb of God, and the Risen Christ.

We must do better if our nation is to have a real future. We must tear down the idols that pollute our nation and places of worship. We must remove the dishonest rights of gun ownership. We must show the true power of God found in love and justice for all.

Peace

*Pastor Enno*