

A Column Especially for All of You Who Hate Me

☒ Some of you may remember the old Perry Como musical variety TV show – and the segment that began with a chorus singing, “Letters, we get letters, we get lots and lots of letters ...” The next line was “Dear Perry, would you be so kind ...” – and then Perry would be so kind to sing an audience favorite from his stack of letters.

Well, this past week, like Perry, I got lots and lots of letters. Except mine began with “Dear Bernie” and ended with, “You’re going to burn in Hell you stupid bastard” – or words to that effect.

Seems like a lot of people who come to this site and watch Bill O’Reilly weren’t happy with my column that said we owe a debt of gratitude to rich people. Imagine an America, without rich people, I wrote. Rich people pay most of the federal income taxes in this country and therefore pick up the lion’s share of the tab for all sorts of programs that help the poor. Despite the fact that I didn’t write a single word demeaning poor people or lower middle-class people – or anybody else – I got lots and lots of letters calling me names I’d rather not repeat here.

Then I went on the Factor with Bill to talk about my column – which was provocatively entitled “Thank God for Rich People.”

After I gave him a brief description of the column, Bill asked me about Jesus’ observation that it would be easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than it would for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.

“What about that?” Bill wanted to know.

“I don’t care what the Bible says,” I responded, meaning I don’t care what the Bible says *about our current tax policy*,

which is what the discussion was about. Then I added, "Besides, except for a few issues, Jesus probably would be a liberal Democrat."

More hate mail. Lots more.

Now, I readily acknowledge that reasonable people may disagree about what I said. Reasonable people may think Jesus was – and would be today – a conservative. My point was simply this: Imagine a modern-day politician – some member of Congress, for example – saying: It would be easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than it would for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. Who do you think would be more likely to utter those words – a liberal Democrat or a conservative Republican?

As I say, reasonable people may disagree. Fine with me. But not fine at all with those who have the inside track to Jesus. Even though the Bible tells us, "Judge not lest ye be judged" the pious crowd sent me sanctimonious letters judging the hell out of me, and saying that I better get right with the Lord – or I'd be sorry.

So I figured, who wants to get hundreds of nasty letters pretty much comparing me to the Devil? Not me, right? So I came up with a brilliant idea. I figured I would write a nice, warm and fuzzy column to try to build bridges with my one time friends who, in my time of need, abandoned me.

So this column is for all of you. In it, I will make no references to religion or politics or the rich or the poor. This column will not be controversial. It will be filled with nice, warm thoughts and, as I say, it is dedicated to all my former friends who are, at the moment, mad at me.

So here goes:

I like sunshine. But not when it's too hot or too cold outside. I like sunshine when the temperature is just right.

I like blue skies. I like blue skies more than I like gray skies, which are also nice.

I like flowers. I like purple and yellow ones the best.

I like trees. Especially big oak trees. I also like palm trees.

I like the color orange. Orange is nice. It reminds me of oranges.

I like people who need people, but I'm not crazy about Barbra Streisand, even though she sure can sing.

I like ponies with spots.

And most of all, I like puppies.

Ok, that's it, my old friends. I hope by generously reaching and showing you some love, perhaps I caused a change of heart among those of you who stopped liking me. If I did, you made me very happy. The end.

Oh yeah, I forgot – one last thing, my closed-minded former friends, who deserted me because I didn't agree with you about everything you hold dear: I truly hope you enjoyed this column because you will never – and I mean NEVER – get another one like it.

Before you can say, "Golly gee, what a great guy Bernie is" it will be back to business as usual. If you can't handle that, boo-freaking- hoo for you.

☒ Now go out and have a nice day. No, make that a GREAT day! ☒