

RICK WARREN AND INVOKING THE INAUGURATION

✘ As you may have noticed, a small war has erupted at the mothership over the nature of the invocation at Obama's inauguration on January 20, 2009. Specifically, whether or not it is appropriate for Obama to have Rick Warren participate. The general FDL position is that it is not appropriate to have Warren participate because he is a discriminatory bigot, to the LGBT community, and others.

I agree wholeheartedly with this position. But I have a more fundamental question.

Why is any of this, Warren, Lowery, or any other religious figure, an official part of the inauguration? If a religious aspect is desired for private parties later etc., fine, but why should overt religion be sanctioned as part of the official initiation of a Presidency? No matter how it is configured, it is going to be offensive to many groups inherently; i.e. those whose religions are snubbed, and those such as the LGBT community, for instance in relation to Warren. Probably some groups somewhere will be similarly put off by Joe Lowery; and, of course, the non-believers and/or atheists don't like any of it.

"America" should not have a preacher. If individuals wish to consider religion vis a vis their government, that is most excellent, but it should be and by individual choice only. God is not for a nation to possess, nor claim the mantle of; that is the province of the individuals in the nation to do, or not do, on their own.

Why is this part of the official inauguration? There is no need to have the new government sanctioned by religion from the get go. The new President, President Obama, will serve and

represent all Americans, of all stripes, colors and beliefs; excluding and alienating so many at the outset seems antithetical to the spirit, even if not the letter, of Constitutional separation of church and state, equal protection and inclusion.

Invoke the spirit of the Constitution instead of of having an invocation at the Inauguration.