

BUTTIGIEG'S RELIGION PROBLEM

Pete Buttigieg, unlike most of his Democratic competitors, is not shy when talking about religion. His problem is that no one knows who his audience is.

When it comes to matters of sexuality and the family, Buttigieg can't persuade traditional Catholics, evangelical Protestants, orthodox Jews, and most Mormons and Muslims, that he is right. His rejection of marriage, properly understood, and his celebration of abortion rights, will not get him one of their votes. So he is trying to appeal to the "religious left."

The "religious left," however, is almost indistinguishable from the secular left: their socialist vision is what conjoins them. The problem for Buttigieg is that many in the secular camp are militants, and they don't want to hear his "God-talk" routine.

Evidence of his problem can be seen in an op-ed column by Kate Cohen in the *Washington Post*. She is drawn to Buttigieg in many ways, but she has one nagging problem with him: She is an atheist—and an angry one at that—and he is a Christian.

Cohen hates the way Buttigieg equates religion with morality. She prefers a morality without religion, arguing that morality is an individual attribute.

She is badly educated. Religion is first and foremost an expression of morality. This is true even of those religions which have very different tenets. While it is true that individuals may have their own moral compass, no society can exist without a moral consensus. This is Sociology 101. Good luck trying to craft a moral consensus that is not grounded in religion.