

# RELIGION GROUNDS MORALITY

The *Forward* is a well-written Jewish weekly published in New York. In the February 16 edition, there was a piece about faith-based programs that quoted Rabbi Sherwin Wine. Rabbi Wine was critical of the Bush administration's effort to fund faith-based social service programs. This was fine but in doing so he took the occasion to criticize President Bush for saying that "the foundation of morality in this country is religion."

Upon reading this remark, William Donohue wrote a letter defending Bush on this matter. The *Forward* published it in its March 9 edition. He argued that Bush's comment was "hardly a partisan or novel idea—it is simply the truth." He then took Rabbi Wine to task:

"Rabbi Wine may find this objectionable but if so, he ought to tell us what morality ought to be grounded in, if not religion. Personal choice? Not only would this deny the validity of a moral order (morality is a social construct, not an individual property), its implications are monstrous. Isn't this exactly the social soil that makes genocide so palatable? If we're left with 'different strokes for different folks,' God help those who are on the receiving end of those whose stroke it is to strike out in anger against the innocent."

Donohue ended by saying, "In short, a society grounded in Judeo-Christian precepts is infinitely preferable to one rooted in relativism."