



# Suggestions for Engaging the Right

- 1) **Do not focus on the “threat” they pose. You are on firmer ground when challenging their agenda.**
- 2) **Remember that this is a fight for control of the political mainstream.**
  - Avoid becoming a zealot and thus marginalizing yourself.
  - Limit the emotionalism of your response.
  - Ensure your credibility by researching your position, and don't misrepresent theirs.
- 3) **If you criticize the Right for imposing their social views upon others, you are using politics in an appropriate way.**
  - Americans are fundamentally uneasy about having religious or social views imposed on them.
- 4) **Engage in debates over specific issue positions rather than general values.**
  - Force them to defend their most extreme positions.
  - When debating an issue, be sure you present a solution, rather than defending the status quo.
  - Avoid getting positioned outside the mainstream on questions of core values.
- 5) **Highlight the limited range of values advocated by the Right.**
  - Challenge their claim to speak for all religious Americans.
  - Don't be afraid to expose how the Religious Right's claim of “values” is often a thin veil over the promotion of prejudice and bigotry.
- 6) **Do not allow the Right to define political differences as a debate over the importance of religion or values.**
  - Don't allow them to accuse you of “Christian bashing.”
  - Don't allow them to define you as “anti-Christian.”
- 7) **It is critical to be on the offensive.**
  - Right-wing groups often gain prominence by attacking something or somebody. They are generally poor at defending themselves. So seize the initiative, and keep them on the defensive.
  - Use their own words to attack them. Make them justify their existence.