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Jesus for president?

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OK, I admit, Jesus Christ is not running for president this year. He promised to return soon enough, to assume public office, but meanwhile, where do the 2008 presidential candidates stand on a military chaplain's right to pray publicly "in Jesus' name"?

I'm not naming names, but let's start with Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton.

When the Navy punished me, a chaplain, for quoting the Bible in the chapel during optionally attended Christian worship, I faxed a formal whistleblower complaint to my New York senator, asking for help. Did she protect her evangelical chaplain? No.

I called her office nearly every day, but nobody returned my phone calls for weeks, until finally, I voice-mailed her press secretary about [my interview with "Jewish Week" newspaper](#), telling how I was punished for requesting Kosher meals for my Jewish sailor. "Shall I tell them Senator Clinton doesn't care about Jewish service members?" I asked. Fearing bad press, Clinton signed a ["letter of inquiry" to the Navy](#) for me that same day.

(Column continues below)

But later, after Navy officials justified to her how I was also "properly punished" for praying "in Jesus' name" and how chaplains really should pray "non-sectarian" prayers in public, my sources witnessed Sen. Clinton taking bold action *against me*. [Opposing a House bill to let chaplains pray according to their faith](#), Clinton personally attended meetings to block our

legislation, preferring to let the Pentagon censor our prayers.

Sen. Barrack Hussein Obama wasn't any better.

While campaigning in Iowa last month, Obama was asked his opinion about Judge Roy Moore, who couldn't display the Ten Commandments in the courthouse, and about me, a chaplain who was discharged for praying in uniform.

First, Sen. Obama falsely claimed he wasn't aware of "the chaplain situation," when I'd personally faxed my whistleblower complaints to his office, and his staff acknowledged placing them on his desk.

Even worse, Obama disrespected the Ten Commandments, claiming, "If you are not a believer, there would be a feeling that you wouldn't be treated as fairly as a Christian. We want everybody to feel they are treated equally."

Apparently, Obama believes God's Ten Commandments are unfair since they might hurt people's "feelings" (as if his pro-abortion laws don't hurt the "feelings" of the unborn). Would President Obama appoint judges who oppose Roy Moore and would jackhammer the 44 displays of the Ten Commandments from our U.S. Supreme Court? He still won't debate Judge Moore on the subject, yet Barrack Hussein Obama campaigns like a good Christian, soft-pedaling his Muslim upbringing.

Conversely, Sen. Sam Brownback votes like he says he believes.

When I first came to Washington, D.C., Sen. Brownback welcomed me to speak at his weekly Values Action Team meeting, where I enlisted dozens of pro-family groups and senators to vote for allowing prayers in Jesus' name.

Brownback personally wrote President Bush to help chaplains, and when our legislation came to the Senate, Sam Brownback again reminded Values Action Team members to stand up for religious liberty. (But he'd never brag about this; he's too humble.) If elected, I've no doubt President Brownback would immediately sign an executive order protecting all chaplains' right to pray according to their faith.

Presidential candidate Duncan Hunter also went to bat for chaplains.

Leading 75 members of Congress with Walter B. Jones, Rep. Hunter (then chairman of the House Armed Services Committee) personally wrote and passed a House bill to let chaplains pray according to their faith. But when his bill got blocked by liberal senators, did he quit? No.

Fighting to the last, Duncan Hunter helped negotiate a compromise with the Pentagon, forcing them to rescind their bad Navy prayer policy, even letting Air Force chaplains pray publicly "in Jesus' name." As commander in chief, I've no doubt Duncan Hunter would force the Pentagon to respect the 1860 law and once again let chaplains pray freely.

Will our next commander in chief protect chaplains? Although Jesus isn't running for president, I remember his warning to discern true prophets from false: "By their fruit ye shall know them." The fruit of these candidates – Clinton, Obama, Brownback, Hunter – may be clearly seen by their stand for (or against) public prayer in Jesus' name.

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Gordon James Klingenschmitt is a former Navy chaplain who sacrificed his career to help change national policy, allowing military chaplains to publicly pray "in Jesus name" – even in uniform. He continues his fight to be reinstated. Klingenschmitt is available to speak and can be reached [via e-mail](#). He encourages readers to sign [his petition to Secretary of Defense Robert Gates](#).
